

# Connecticut Guardian

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## Four more years Bush remains Commander-in-Chief

JIM GARAMONE  
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

President George W. Bush will remain the commander-in-chief of the U.S. military for four more years.

Massachusetts Sen. John F. Kerry conceded the election in a phone call to the president the morning after Election Day. He publicly conceded the election later that day in Boston.

Saying that it was time to work together, Kerry addressed a large crowd in the same location he started his campaign in.

"...In an American election, there are no losers, because whether or not our candidates are successful, the next morning we all wake up as Americans," Kerry said.

Bush spoke later in the day in Washington, thanking his supporters for his victory. In his remarks, Bush echoed some of Kerry's earlier comments when he called for the country to come together and to work together for the greater good.

"We have one country, one Constitution and one future that binds us, and when we

come together and work together, there is no limit to the greatness of America."

During the campaign, Bush vowed to continue to take the war to the terrorists. He pointed to the successful elections in Afghanistan as proof his policy against terrorists was working.

The next foreseeable major milestone in the war on terrorism is the January elections in Iraq. Iraqis will elect representatives to write the country's constitution.

U.S. military personnel will continue to be an integral part of the war on terrorism. Servicemembers in Iraq will work to train the Iraqi Army, Iraqi police and the Iraqi National Guard. There are now about 110,000 members of the Iraqi security forces trained and equipped.

But the war on terrorism is not just a military operation. Bush also has vowed to address the problems that lead people to terrorism in the first place. The United States is working with friends and allies around the world to promote democracy and export freedom.



President Bush gives the thumbs up as he boards Air Force One. (White House file photo)

## Judge's ruling pauses anthrax vaccination program

SAMANTHA L. QUIGLEY  
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

The Defense Department Defense has temporarily paused the anthrax vaccination program because of an injunction issued by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Dr. William Winkenwerder emphasized the injunction was not related to the safety or effectiveness of the vaccine, but rather to a technical issue as to whether the Food and Drug Administration followed a proper procedure when it issued a rule about the vaccine one year ago.

"I just would like to reassure everyone that the vaccine is safe and effective," Winkenwerder said. "The most definitive study was one that was independent, apart from the Department of Defense, done two years ago by the National Academy of Sciences.

"They looked at all the evidence," he said. "They said the vaccine is safe and effective against all forms of anthrax."

The vaccination program was also paused briefly in late 2003. That ruling was reversed roughly two weeks after being handed down. Officials hope that, as in 2003, the current legal issues will be resolved quickly and the program will restart in the near future, he said.

Winkenwerder said he didn't want to speculate what would be required of the Food and Drug Administration to work through these matters.

"Those really are legal issues that are being worked on by lawyers by the Department of Defense, from the Justice Department, from the FDA working together to address the concerns that have been raised by this opinion," he said.

The results of the pause are unclear at this time, but Winkenwerder said DoD expects no more than a delay.

"Obviously attorneys ... have to get together to look at these issues and respond," he said.

## Governor kicks off 2nd Annual Operation E.L.F.

### Program expanded to include more families

SGT. 1ST CLASS DEBBI NEWTON  
STATE PA NCO

"You often ask, 'What can I do?' I'm going to tell you," said Gov. M. Jodi Rell as she kicked off this year's Operation E.L.F. during a press conference at the Hartford Armory.

"You can make donations of new, unwrapped toys, gift cards, phone cards and cash to help put a smile on a servicemembers' child's face." Operation E.L.F. (Embracing Lonely Families) started a year ago when then Lt. Gov. Rell wanted to give the citizens of Connecticut a way to help deployed Connecticut National Guardsmen and their families during the holiday season. The program was more successful last year than anyone could have imagined

when it began.

"Last year the people of the state supported our troops with 15,000 toys, 10,000 gallons of fuel oil, a million minutes of phone cards and \$50,000 in cash donations. Frankly, I'm looking forward to outdoing ourselves this year," said Gov. Rell.

Mrs. Kim Hoffman, Connecticut National Guard Family Program Manager had nothing but praise for Gov. Rell's idea for Operation E.L.F., state residents and all the volunteers who made last year's event so successful.

"She really does deserve the credit," said Hoffman of Gov. Rell. "She didn't think small. She wanted to do something for the



Gov. M. Jodi Rell kicks off the second annual Operation E.L.F. during a press conference at the Hartford Armory on Nov. 1. (Photo by Pfc. Joseph Brooks, 65th PCH)

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# Up Front with the Adjutant General

## Thanksgiving and the continued focus on families

November marks the start of the busy holiday season for Americans everywhere. As members of the Connecticut National Guard family, we know that our Guard has been very busy since the tragedies of September 11, 2001, and the beginning of the Global War on Terrorism.

Our members have been called and continue to serve in various capacities. Whether as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom, our force is strong, professional and more publicly supported and respected than ever before. The Guard's contributions to the efforts in Iraq have not gone unnoticed. The extended deployments have resulted in an obvious increase in time away from loved ones back home. During this holiday season we are entering, the impact of time away from home will increase greatly. Birthdays and anniversaries have come and gone. Thanksgiving is upon us and Christmas will follow shortly thereafter. Strength will come from the friendships and relationships formed throughout the family support network.

The military family suffers from the separations most during the holiday season and this year will be especially difficult. Mothers and fathers, husbands and wives, sons and daughters have now been deployed for the first time in their careers. It is my hope that you can take comfort in knowing that the work they are doing is of benefit to our State, the Nation and the World. More importantly the Governor of our great state and the leadership of the Connecticut National Guard recognize that without the love and support of a member's family, their service would not be possible.

Once again this year Governor Rell is sponsoring Operation ELF to help Connecticut servicemembers and their families during the holiday season. Last year in six short weeks, Operation ELF generated thousands of new, unwrapped toys, gift cards for grocery and department stores, seasonal services and nearly \$50,000 in monetary contributions to the Connecticut National Guard Foundation. Our sincere thanks to Governor Rell for making Operation ELF a priority during these difficult times in the lives of the families of those deployed.

As our Connecticut Guard Families celebrate Thanksgiving, and as their loved ones are deployed many miles away from home, we must reflect on the many blessings we enjoy individually and share as Americans. From its pilgrim heritage, Thanksgiving has come to signify the American spirit....a spirit that is one of both self-reliance and of gratitude for the abundance in our land. That spirit, more than anything, helps to nurture the freedom and prosperity that Americans hold so dear. That same spirit sustains our membership, their families and the citizen soldiers who continue today to defend our freedom.

George Washington made Thanksgiving his first proclamation for our new nation and this holiday has become America's oldest tradition. We continue as a nation the values of our founding fathers; to affirm our love of family, friends and community, and bestow blessings upon one another for the bountiful harvest that we share.

So as we celebrate the holidays over the next several weeks, let us keep our deployed

Soldiers, Airmen and women everywhere in our thoughts and prayers, for we in the military are part of one large and extended family. May we also be reminded of what's most important in life—our families, our friends, their love and undoubtedly, our liberty.

As we offer thanks with family and friends this holiday, let us remember those less fortunate and the countless others who cannot celebrate the day with their loved ones. Make no doubt about it these will be tough times, for many the first time that loved ones have been away from home during a holiday season. Make no doubt about it that I have directed my staff to focus on each and every family member of those deployed, to reach out and contact them, to support their needs, and to ensure they know that they are truly a part of our extended family.

Proudly we will continue to serve as our Governor and President call on our competent and well-prepared organization.

To all our Guard families— I thank you for your patience, your contributions, your continued understanding and certainly for your service. We know our Guard could not survive without your support.

Carolyn and I wish you and your families all the very best this Thanksgiving holiday. May God bless all of our service members, our families and America.



Maj. Gen.  
William A. Cugno  
Adjutant General

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First Company Governors Foot Guard

Second Company Governors Foot Guard

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REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE SERGEANT MAJOR  
203 ARMY PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON DC 20310-0200

August 24, 2004

Dear Family Member:

I am proud and humbled to join the Armed Forces Services YMCA during Military Family Month in thanking you for the hard work and dedication you show every day. Your outstanding support to the Army family is unrivaled.

As we continue to fight the global war on terrorism, our soldiers can spend long periods of time away from their families. We are an Army at war, supporting a nation at war. Our young men and women serve willingly to preserve the freedoms for all Americans. Our Army has a tough mission and they need the support of husbands and wives, children and parents, brothers and sisters. Our families and communities are what make our Army and this country strong.

During this week-long celebration, I ask you to remember America's sons and daughters in harm's way. We would like to recognize and applaud you for your efforts and support of our soldiers and families. I extend my most heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to you from those of us who serve.

Sincerely,

*Kenneth O. Preston*  
Kenneth O. Preston  
Sergeant Major of the Army





# Top enlisted Guardsman meets Connecticut Airmen

STAFF SGT. CAROLYN A. ASELTON  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS NCOIC, 103<sup>RD</sup> FIGHTER WING AND  
2<sup>ND</sup> LT. JEFFERSON S. HEILAND  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER, 103<sup>RD</sup> FIGHTER WING

BRADLEY AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, East Granby, Conn. – The Command Chief Master Sgt. of the Air National Guard met with members of the 103<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Wing here and the 103<sup>rd</sup> Air Control Squadron at Camp Rell during facility tours Oct. 2.

Chief Master Sgt. Richard A. Smith spent the day talking with unit members about their careers, deployments and aspirations.

“I have seen some real smart young people, which is impressive because that is an indication of what the future is going to be here,” Smith said.

After a morning at Camp Rell with the ACS, the command chief headed north for a lunch with members of the Junior Enlisted Council in the dining facility here.

Afterward, Smith toured the base, stopping in many work centers.

He introduced himself and asked Airmen their names, shook their hands and listened to what they had to say.

Most importantly, he said, he was here to thank the members for what they have done.

“(Smith) is a down-to-earth person...he is easy to talk to,” said Staff Sgt. Joe Cabrera,

information manager, 103<sup>rd</sup> Operations Group. As a member of the JEC, he lunched with Smith and then led him on a tour of the operations work center. “You can tell he is interested.”

When Cabrera opened the door to the A-10 simulator for the command chief, Smith declined and said, “We want to see the people.”

In the intelligence shop, he thanked the Airmen for their contributions and took a minute to learn about their civilian lives.

“How’s college going,” Smith asked Senior Airman James L. Driscoll, intelligence craftsman, 103<sup>rd</sup> Operations Support Flight. “What are you taking up?”

From the operations building, Smith concluded his tour in the munitions storage area. He listened as Master Sgt. Peter Martucci, munitions area element chief, 103<sup>rd</sup> Maintenance Squadron, described his section’s ability to succeed despite low manning.

“I have been impressed with the people. I am impressed with their attitudes, their can-do attitudes,” Smith said of the Connecticut Air National Guard members.

“Even the sections that are down, they can be ten people down, it does not matter, ‘We’ll get it done.’”

Smith’s base visits are designed to get feedback from the field and to deliver the director of the Air National Guard’s messages.

“There is a history established with command chiefs of being the eyes and ears of the director and go out and bring back to the director what is going on with...primarily the 95,000 enlisted members,” he said.

In addition to extending the director’s gratitude, the command chief talked about the senior leadership’s two big concerns: sexual harassment and suicide.

“Those are the two issues that affect our forces in an adverse way,” he said. “One (incident) is too many.”

The command chief’s visit began with the Chief’s Induction ceremony on base Oct. 1. It concluded with a command chiefs and first sergeants dinner following the base tour before returning to Arlington, Va.

Smith enlisted in the Air National Guard in 1971 and spent 28 years in various medical career fields with the Ohio Air National Guard.

Prior to his current assignment he served as a wing command chief and the state command chief.



Command Chief Master Sgt. Richard A. Smith, command chief master sergeant of the Air National Guard, listens to Senior Airmen Matthew Meyers and Brian J. Gilbert, munitions systems journeymen, talk about MK-82 low-drag bombs during the command chief's visit in October. (Photo by Senior Airman Erin E. McNamara, 103<sup>rd</sup> Communications Flight)



Master Sergeants Alicia M. McGrath and Paul Fitzgerald, ground safety craftsmen, 103<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Wing, talk with Command Chief Master Sgt. Richard A. Smith, command chief master sergeant of the Air National Guard, during his visit to Connecticut in October. (Photo by Senior Airman Erin E. McNamara, 103<sup>rd</sup> Communications Flight)



# Connecticut Soldiers receive awards for training fellow Soldiers in Iraq

**SGT. 1<sup>ST</sup> CLASS WILLIAM APPLEBY**  
**118<sup>TH</sup> MB (AS), PAO REP.**

BALAD, IRAQ – Soldiers of the 118<sup>th</sup> Med Bn (AS), who served as instructors at LSA Anaconda's Education Center and at camps and FOBs throughout Iraq, were recognized in an awards ceremony on LSA Anaconda.

Col. Ronny Cox, Post Commander of LSA Anaconda and Command Sgt. Maj. William J. Gainey, III Corps and MNC-I command sergeant major presented Certificates of Appreciation to Soldiers who volunteered to instruct fellow Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen continue their education pursuits even during wartime thousands of miles from their bases or home colleges.

Gainey commented that these Soldiers were helping his warfighters become smarter and more proficient in today's

technologically advanced battlefield. He compared his career to "standing on a hill, holding a rope to my Soldiers below. I'm not going to pull you up, only help you stand up so that you can walk up the hill."

He praised the volunteers for their efforts to hold the ropes too, and give soldiers the tools to succeed up their hill.

The 118<sup>th</sup> Med Bn (AS) greatly assisted in the setting up of the Education Center. Soldiers volunteered many hours moving equipment and furniture to the Center's location, and help set it up. Sgt. Dominic Rondina, who taught computer hardware stated, "With the ever increasing technology that the military uses, I hope I'm part of training soldiers for the great leap forward."

Staff Sgt. Chris McCarty added "Working in the Education Center allowed us to work



*From l to r: Spc. Colleen Taylor, Staff Sgt. Christopher McCarty, Sgt. Dominic Rondina, Lt. Col. Robert Cody pose after being recognized as Instructors by the Education Center of LSA Anaconda, Iraq. (Photo by Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class William Appleby, 118<sup>th</sup> Med. Bn., PAO Rep.)*

with other people in all the services and see what else is happening on the LSA".

Soldiers recognized for their efforts were: Spc. Colleen Taylor, CLEP Biology; Sgt.

Dominic Rondina, Information Technology; Staff Sgt. Christopher McCarty, CLEP Humanities; and Lt. Col. Robert Cody, CLEP U.S. History.

## Sports news flash from Iraq: Surging Boston Red Sox sweep St. Louis Cardinals for 2004 World Series

**1<sup>ST</sup> LT. ANTHONY FALVEY**  
**118<sup>TH</sup> MED BN, ASSISTANT S-4**

Balad (Anaconda), Iraq - The surging 2004 Boston Red Sox have silenced a majority of their negative critics. At approximately 0700 Middle Eastern time, Soldiers from the 118<sup>th</sup> Medical Battalion (Newington, Conn.) witnessed the St. Louis Cardinal's last out- and a long awaited Red Sox World Series victory.

On hand in the Battalion's MWR (Morale, Welfare and Recreation) room viewing the well deserved Boston win were Sgt. Michael Forte (Alpha Company, 118<sup>th</sup> MED ASMB, Concord, Mass.) and Staff Sgt. Juan Montoya (111<sup>th</sup> MED BN, San Antonio, Texas, attached).

Forte, a motor sergeant for Alpha Company, a resident of Carver, Mass. remarked, "The Sox win was unbelievable." "To go eight straight wins and come from three games down with the Yankees is great."

The Sox's victory sparked a new fan with Montoya. Montoya, a medical supply sergeant and a proud father of three, hails from San Antonio, Texas. Smiling, Montoya stated, "I am happy for the city of Boston. I am now a Red Sox fan, because of their amazing comeback and eventual World Series win. Go Boston!"

The Boston victory is sure to gain more new fans for the team. New fans, to include Montoya, are already starting here in Iraq.



*While on active in Iraq, Sgt. Michael Forte (Alpha Company, 118<sup>th</sup> MED, ASMB) and staff Sgt. Juan Montoya (111<sup>th</sup> MED BN, attached) both of the 118<sup>th</sup> MED BN (Newington, Conn.), celebrate the Boston's Red Sox 2004 World Series victory over the St. Louis Cardinals. (Photo by 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Anthony Falvey, 118 Medical Battalion)*

## Soldiers helping Soldiers: 118<sup>th</sup> provides medical care in Iraq

**1<sup>ST</sup> LT. ELIZABETH MURAVNIK**  
**AMBULANCE PLATOON LEADER**  
**HSC 118 MED BN (AS)**

Well, it has been almost eight months since HSC 118<sup>th</sup> Medical Battalion landed in Kuwait. We have been through a lot since then.

We made it through our convoy up here without conflict. Granted, we were delayed due to IEDs already found ahead of us, but that is okay. We didn't get near any. We have survived the mortar attacks here in LSA Anaconda.

We have put our medical skills to use during them, but thankfully not on ourselves. And we have had Soldiers outside the wire that have seen IEDs and small arms fire; but again we are unscathed.

Our mission here is to run the Troop

Medical Clinic, or TMC. The Headquarters element (HQ) is located about a mile away from us. That is the group that has the Battalion Staff, Communications, and Preventative Medicine sections. The Maintenance section is also a part of the HQ, but they are located in another area of the LSA, not far from the HQ. The Mental Health section works with us at the TMC.

We took over the TMC in March from the 109<sup>th</sup> ASMB. In that time, we have seen more than 12,000 Soldiers, civilians, and local nationals for sick call. That does not include patients seen by our other areas of Post Deployment Health Assessments, Immunizations, Malaria Briefings, or Optometry.

As the weather changes, so has our average patient load. It has ranged from 90-

100 patients per day to 55-60 patients per day. Our medics are quite busy.

We also run a "911" emergency system on post. We have two ambulances, and when an emergency call comes in, the closest ambulance is dispatched to the scene, usually with a fire truck or Military Police patrol for help. These responses are not limited just to mortar attacks. Soldiers that injure themselves on the job and heat casualties are a big part of life here.

Since arrival on LSA Anaconda, HSC 118<sup>th</sup> Medical Battalion has taken part in the planning and execution of MASCAL (mass casualty) exercises. The skills sharpened in the exercises have been put to use on numerous occasions.

In two separate incidents, both mortar attacks outside the PX nearby, our medics

and support personnel responded from the TMC to treat and transport the injured Soldiers and civilians. They saved lives both of those days.

These Soldiers here have seen things I wish they didn't have to. Some of it will stay with them for the rest of their lives. But it is their job, and they do it selflessly. They have been through what others their age (the majority of the Soldiers here are 19-24) can only imagine.

With all that is going on here, we do have fun. We have had volleyball tournaments, picnics, poetry nights, and we have several intramural teams. We make the best of the time when we can. And with the worst of the heat behind us, we look forward to the cooler weather bringing us closer to home.



# 118th Medical Battalion cuts ribbon on new clinic

DEFEND AMERICA

Anaconda-based Soldiers joined a local sheik and village leaders in a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of a new medical clinic near here Aug. 19, according to 13th Corps Support Command officials.

Soldiers from the 118th Medical Battalion, Connecticut Army National Guard, and the civil affairs staff of 13th Corps Support Command sponsored the construction of the new clinic in Al Anwar Village. The clinic was built from the ground up in less than two months and cost more than \$79,000.

"They have really done a great job [on construction]," said Lt. Col. Robert Cody, the "We wanted to give something back to the Iraqi people," he added, explaining why his battalion sponsored the clinic construction.

"It's a great feeling to be here and be part of this clinic opening," said Spc. Juliet Barclay, a battalion Soldier. Barclay said it is easy to get caught up in day-to-day life on post and seeing the kids in the village reminded her of the true reason that she is here.

"Seeing all these needy children running around barefoot is not something I am used to," she said. Seeing them made her want to go home and hug her kids, she added.

The 118th Medical Battalion plans to furnish the clinic and is also working on getting expendable medical supplies to stock the clinic's treatment rooms.

Since January the 13th Corps Support Command has funded more than \$4.3 million in infrastructure improvements ranging from water and power plant improvements to school and medical clinic construction in the villages surrounding Logistics Support Area Anaconda.



*U.S. Army Master Sgt. Jack Solorio, 13th Corps Support Command civil affairs office, poses with children in Al Anwar village near Logistics Support Area Anaconda, Balad, Iraq, Aug. 19, 2004. Solorio was in the village for a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the opening of a new medical clinic sponsored by the 118th Medical Battalion. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. James Trui)*



*U.S. Army Lt. Col. Robert Cody, the 118th Medical Battalion commander, cuts the ribbon signifying the opening of a new medical clinic in Al Anwar village near Logistics Support Area Anaconda, Balad, Iraq, Aug. 19, 2004. Col. Nicholas Zoeller, the 13th Corps Support Command Civil Affairs Officer, looks on along with the village sheik, the general contractor and other village leaders. The 118th Medical Battalion sponsored the construction of the clinic, which cost more than \$70,000 and provided jobs for 27 local villagers. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. James Trui)*



# Operation E.L.F. kicks off second year of helping families

From Page 1

children, the families and the spouses of our deployed Soldiers and Airmen."

The program's intent, according to Hoffman, is to reach all branches of service in Connecticut. Last year, however, there were so many other programs already in place that Operation E.L.F. "directed all of its resources to helping the families of our deployed Army and Air Guardsmen."

As of Dec. 22, 2003, Operation E.L.F. had helped 1,100 families with 700 children from newborn to 18 years old. There were a total of 3,000 family members left behind when Soldiers and Airmen deployed. This included parents, spouses, children and siblings.

"Every child received toys last year," said Hoffman. "All 700 children."

Connecticut residents came together in an overwhelming manner to help support the Soldiers and Airmen of the Connecticut Guard. Individuals as well as many businesses, donated 15,000 toys, 2,000 care packages, \$6,000 in Stop&Shop gift cards, \$4,000 in miscellaneous gift cards, \$5,500 in car wash gift cards, \$3,000 worth of postage and \$50,000 in cash donations to the

National Guard Foundation of Connecticut, Inc.

In addition to individual donations, Operation E.L.F. also offers the opportunity for businesses or other organizations to "Adopt-A-Family."

Some Guard families take a huge pay cut when the Soldier or Airman goes from a civilian job to being deployed. Many of those families find themselves wondering how they will provide Christmas to their children. That's where the Adopt-A-Family program steps in.

Businesses or organizations are anonymously hooked up with a family in need and receives a list of the needs and wishes of the family. The business then provides for those wants and needs. The family does know who its benefactor is and may contact them if they wish.

One of last year's families, with seven children, received bicycles for each of the children.

But even with such a generous outpouring from the state, there is always one area that could be improved, and Operation E.L.F. is no exception to that rule.

Last year, gifts for teenaged children of deployed servicemembers were few and far between.

Operation E.L.F. was able to provide gift cards for department stores, discount stores and gas stations to the teens, but would like to see things such as movie passes, video store gift cards, music store gift cards, generic gift cards that can be used anywhere, gas cards and even cd players donated for the older children.

The other improvement to this year's program is that Operation E.L.F. will not be accepting care package items for the servicemembers. People who want to donate items for care packages will be directed to organizations such as Canton Cares and Connecticut Supports our Soldiers.

"Our focus this year is to help a Soldier by helping his family," said Hoffman.

As always, operations like this take a great deal of effort and commitment. Last year, about two dozen Guardsmen volunteered to help wrap and deliver gifts.

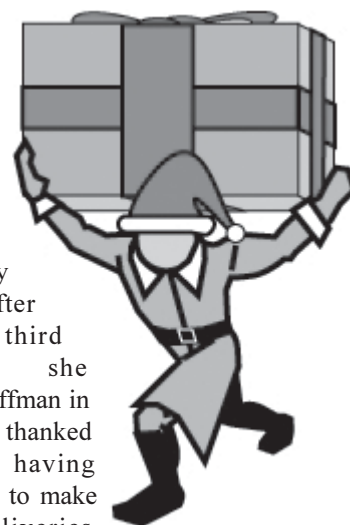
One of those Guardsmen hadn't really wanted to help one particular day and was feeling like Scrooge and the Grinch all rolled up into one, when Hoffman asked her if she could make a delivery of toys to a family on her way home.

Not wanting to say no to Hoffman, the

Soldier agreed and wound up making three deliveries on her way home. After the third delivery, she called Hoffman in tears and thanked her for having asked her to make those deliveries.

Somewhere along the way she had realized what was really important and had found her Christmas spirit.

For people who want to help this year, there will be a gift wrapping party on the drillshed floor of the Hartford Armory everyday from Dec. 15 to Dec. 17 from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. All wrapping supplies will be provided and Hoffman said she is looking for volunteers who can give as little as one hour to those who can come all three days.



Gov. M. Jodi Rell, Capt. Lauri Tinelle, National Guard Family Program, Staff Sgt. Audra Fisher, 1109th AVCRAD, Brig. Gen. I.J. Zembrzuski, Assistant Adjutant General and Sgt. Maj. Toby Cormier, Handyman Hotline manager, all share a laugh following a press conference kicking-off their year's Operation E.L.F. Fisher was deployed last year and her children were beneficiaries of the state residents' generosity at Christmas. This year, Operation E.L.F. will be working more closely with the Handyman Hotline and will accept donations of time and services for such things as raking lawns, shoveling snow and minor repair work. (Photo by Pfc. Joseph Brooks, 65th PCH)



# When duty calls, Connecticut answers, again

Pfc. JOSEPH BROOKS  
65<sup>th</sup> PCH

This month Connecticut sent an additional 130 Soldiers to join the 450 Connecticut National Guard Soldiers and Airmen that are now mobilized in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

On Oct. 26, the Soldiers from the 141<sup>st</sup> Medical Company and the 208<sup>th</sup> Personnel Service Detachment were joined by their families for a sendoff ceremony. The units were optimistic about their upcoming missions and ready to answer their government's call for service.

"My Soldiers are well trained, prepared and excited about our upcoming mission," said Capt. Jeremy Lingenfelter, the commanding officer of the 208<sup>th</sup> PSD.

The 208<sup>th</sup> PSD is facing its first deployment. The unit will be providing support to combat-essential personnel by overseeing the welfare of units already deployed.

The 141<sup>st</sup> Medical Company is facing a very different mission.

"We essentially act like an EMT," Capt. Anne-Marie Garcia explained. "Our job is to provide medical evacuation and level-one response to the wounded."

The two units shared the drill-shed floor at the Hartford Armory the night of the sendoff ceremony and even shared a family dinner together. There was an unmistakable solidarity between the units as they stood in their respective formations. The Soldiers

who had never met before that night shared in the acceptance of their duty and the admiration of all the friends and family they would be leaving behind.

Gov. M. Jodi Rell was on hand to address the units. She wished them luck and promised to be present when each of them returns, unharmed.

Sen. John Larson also addressed the units, "May the government be worthy of the sacrifice that you and your families make on a daily basis."

Before they broke formation, Gov. Rell gave each of the commanders a Connecticut state flag, a gesture which has become tradition at the sendoff ceremonies.

The 141<sup>st</sup> Medical Company departed on Oct. 28 from the New Brittan Armory. The Soldiers of the 141<sup>st</sup> took their last opportunity to say goodbye to friends and loved ones before boarding a bus for Fort Dix, N.J. Amidst the usual tears and sadness there was an overwhelming sentiment of hope and of duty.

"I'll see you in a year and a half," Spc. Kimberly Johnson told her family as she boarded the bus.

The 208<sup>th</sup> PSD departed on Nov. 1 from the Army Aviation Support Facility (AASF) in Windsor Locks. Family and friends arrived at the AASF as early as 4:30 A.M. to see their loved ones depart. Neither the cold temperature nor the early hour stopped the friends and family from being present to see their Soldiers off.

**"My Soldiers are well trained, prepared and excited about our upcoming mission."**

Capt. Jeremy Lingenfelter, commander, 208<sup>th</sup> PSD



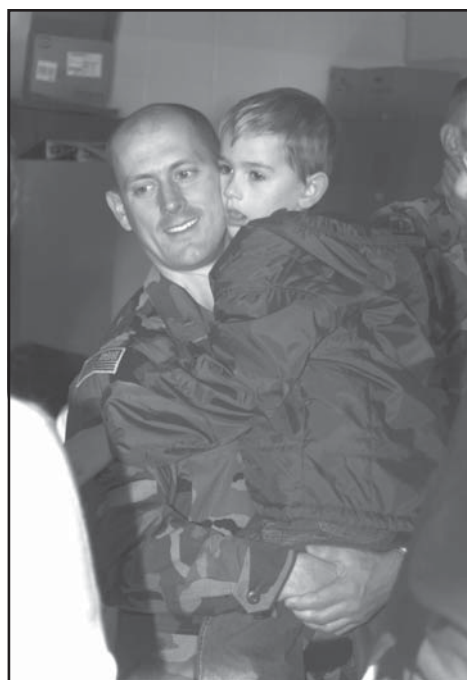
Sgt. Michael Lorenz, 208<sup>th</sup> PSD and his girlfriend, Robin Sizemore, wait for the unit's final formation. (Photo by Pfc. Joseph Brooks, 65<sup>th</sup> PCH)



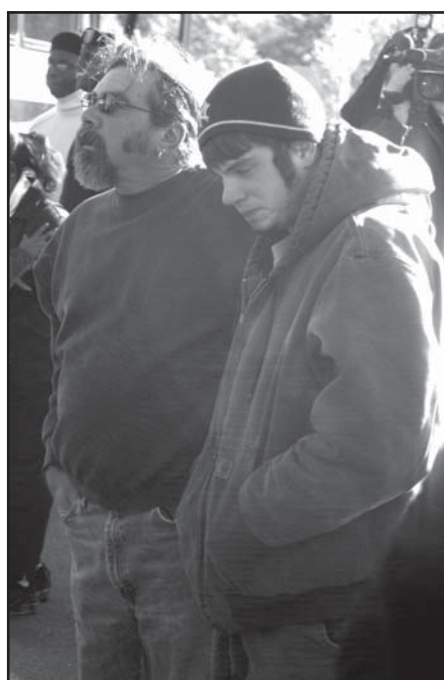
1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. John Stonaha, 141<sup>st</sup> Medical Company is optimistic as he prepares to leave on deployment. (Photo by Pfc. Joseph Brooks, 65<sup>th</sup> PCH)



Spc. Kelly Rodriguez, 208<sup>th</sup> PSD tries to comfort her husband Michael during a quiet moment before she leaves for her unit's mission. (Photo by Pfc. Joseph Brooks, 65<sup>th</sup> PCH)



2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Jim Moran, 141<sup>st</sup> Medical Company says goodbye to his son Kevin before he leaves for his unit's mission in the Global War on Terrorism. (Photo by Pfc. Joseph Brooks, 65<sup>th</sup> PCH)



The father and brother of Spc. Matthew J. Aiello, 141<sup>st</sup> Medical Company, Bob and Dan, watch as he departs for his mobilization station. (Photo by Pfc. Joseph Brooks, 65<sup>th</sup> PCH)



Sgt. (Ret.) James F. O'Neil, gives his deploying son, Staff Sgt. James R. O'Neil 141<sup>st</sup> Medical Company, a hug before he leaves for duty. (Photo by Pfc. Joseph Brooks, 65<sup>th</sup> PCH)



# Area Support Group arrives in Baghdad

## *Begins support operations in joint setting*

(Editor's Note: The information in this story comes from a CENTCOM press release.)

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Ninety members of the Connecticut Army National Guard's 143<sup>rd</sup> Area Support Group deployed to Iraq to begin a one year rotation working in the Joint Area Support Group (JASG) in support of the U.S. State Department Mission in Iraq.

The JASG provides administrative and logistics support to the U.S. Mission-Iraq as well as more than 20,000 tenants working within the International Zone and oversees security operations for the International Zone.

This mission will be a unique one for the Guard since this is the first time they will not be working as a self contained unit.

"We would typically go to a forward operating base, and then set up and run all support operations for that base," said Col. Thomas Stefanko, 143<sup>rd</sup> Area Support Group Commander. "Here we are doing what we normally do but we are working within the framework of a much larger organization including other branches of the military and civilian contractors."

They will be working in all areas of support operations including legal, personnel

management, providing construction and infrastructure management and computer support among other operations.

Members of the Guard have known about the mission since July and have spent the last month preparing for the deployment at Ft. Drum, NY.

"All units in the Army are required to meet the same standards of training," said Stefanko. "Our training and preparations to deploy at Ft. Drum demonstrated that we are up to this task."

Most were excited about the opportunity to be in Iraq for the historic period that will cover the elections.

"We are very fortunate to be here right now," said 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Ryan K. Miller. "This is the dawn of a new era for the Iraqi people and for the Middle East. Democracy is being forged here before us; we are very fortunate to be assisting in and witness to this historic development."

About 25 percent of the Soldiers deployed with the 143<sup>rd</sup> are full time members of the Connecticut Guard. The other 75 percent are part time. The 143<sup>rd</sup> will now compose of more than half of the military members assigned to the JASG.

Units assigned to the 143<sup>rd</sup> can trace their

lineage back to 1636 making them the fourth oldest organized militia in the country. In their more recent past they have deployed

to other locations in the Middle East, as well as Bosnia.



The Soldiers of the 143<sup>rd</sup> ASG walk towards the plane taking them to Kuwait, carrying with them essential gear they will need in the coming months overseas. (Photo by Spc. Jesse J. Stanley, 65<sup>th</sup> PCH)

## *Leaders unveil updated utility uniform colors, pattern*

TECH. SGT. DAVID A. JABLONSKI  
AIR FORCE PRINT NEWS

Responding to Airmen's feedback, Air Force leaders unveiled an alternative utility uniform color scheme and pattern Nov. 2 as part of the ongoing wear-test that was announced in August 2003.

Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Gerald R. Murray are now wearing the latest test version of the utility uniform during visits to Airmen serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The most striking change in this version is the switch from a deep blue, gray and green color scheme to a more subdued mix of tan, blue and two shades of green. And the tiger-stripe pattern is now pixelated.

This test version includes design changes incorporated in September based on feedback from Airmen.

More than 700 people at 32 installations are wear-testing the first test uniform. These Airmen participated in scientific surveys and focus groups. Their feedback was instrumental in making these most recent adjustments. The original plan called for only 300 testers, but uniform board officials decided to increase the number of testers to get more exposure and collect more test data. A select group will test the newest version.

Data showed that a service-unique appearance was very important to Airmen.

"Ninety-one percent of the Airmen responded in favor of a distinctive Air Force utility uniform," Murray said. "Airmen take great pride in serving in America's Air Force. Having a distinct uniform that presents a professional appearance to the public and our sister services, when we are at home station or deployed, is important"

A unique Air Force-designed uniform has another big advantage.

"Our new utility uniform incorporates a unique fit tailored for men and women, and a variety of realistic sizes beyond just small, medium and large," the chief said. "More than 20 percent of our Airmen are women, and we continually received feedback on how the male uniforms they currently wear do not fit well. Fit and comfort are important for all Airmen to project a professional military image."

Officials said they are reaping additional benefits of this particular uniform wear-test process.

Air Force Clothing Office officials took detailed measurements of as many body types as possible and recorded them into a database for future uniform design studies. Since the last such measurement in the 1960s, officials discovered that the average Airmen now has a more athletic build.

Not only are Airmen more fit to fight; they are deployed more often and for longer periods than ever before. There is no time to fuss over finicky uniforms, officials said.

"The wash and wear uniform will be easier and cheaper to maintain," said Senior Master Sgt. Jacqueline Dean, uniform board superintendent. "The permanent-press treatment eliminates the need for ironing, and home washing can save an Airman from \$180 to \$240 in laundry costs over the course of a year."

Dean oversees the wear test and leads the uniform board's campaign to display the uniform as much as possible in a variety of locations.

"The wear test allows Airmen around the world to see the uniform in work places and to give feedback on its appearance, comfort, function and maintenance," Dean said. "The chief of staff took that feedback into consideration when making the decision to move forward with expanding the test to include the new color and pattern."

Special operations and survival, evasion, resistance and escape Airmen will field-test



The Air Force utility uniform's revised colors include tan, blue and two shades of green in a pixelated tiger-stripe pattern. Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Gerald R. Murray are wearing the updated utility uniform during visits to Airmen serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. David A. Jablonski)

the new utility uniform's pattern and colors to see how they perform in extreme conditions.

In January 2005, the uniform board will standardize the pattern, material and specifications and deliver the results to the Defense Logistics Agency for production. Normal production to delivery time can take 18 to 24 months.



# Early diagnosis saves lives

## *Identify breast cancer risk through self-examination*

Spc. JORDAN E. WERME  
65<sup>TH</sup> PCH

In the past 60 years, the risk of a woman developing breast cancer has increased from five percent to nearly 15 percent. The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2003 nearly 40,000 women died of breast cancer or breast cancer related illnesses.

Breast cancer is a very serious risk in today's female population and must be dealt with in a serious manner. And in each case, knowing the risk factors and knowing what steps you can take to identify possible cancerous abnormalities in your own body, can help save your life.

### Breast Cancer Risk Factors

According to [www.WebMD.com](http://www.WebMD.com) and studies done by The Cleveland Clinic, there are several significant risk factors which can help determine a woman's probability of developing breast cancer.

The most significant of these factors is a past history of cancer in one breast. If the original cancer occurred before the woman entered menopause, the risk of developing a second cancer, unrelated to the first, increases by almost 400 percent.

Another major risk factor is aging. The Cleveland Clinic estimates that 77 percent of women diagnosed with breast cancer each year are passed age 50, and that half of these women are older than 65. A woman between the ages of 50 and 59 has a one in 40 chance of developing breast cancer.

A family history of breast cancer also puts a woman at greater risk of developing breast cancer. A woman whose mother, sister or daughter had breast cancer is twice as likely to have the same problem, and if there are two direct relations with a history of breast cancer, it becomes five times as likely.

There are several lesser risk factors as well. A woman who has her first child after age 30 or who does not have children at all is somewhat more likely to experience breast cancer. A woman who began menstruating prior to age 12 is at somewhat greater risk. Entering menopause after age 50, being overweight or drinking alcohol can also increase the risks of breast cancer. And still there are other factors whose exact roles have not yet been determined by research.

Many of these risk factors can now be identified through genetic testing, said Capt. Kathleen L. King, an advanced registered nurse practitioner with the CTARNG Medical Detachment.

But a woman who has any of these risk factors, even several of them, is not guaranteed to develop breast cancer, or any other cancer. In fact, most women who develop breast cancer show none of the apparent risk factors. In order to identify any present risks and to assure an early diagnosis, WebMD and The Cleveland Clinic advise that women begin breast self-examinations at age 20 and begin breast examinations by their health care provider; every three years at age 20, and annually beginning at age 40.

### Breast Self-Examination (BSE)

The most effective methods of detection are the mammography (an x-ray of the breast) and clinical breast exam, both of which are administered by a professional health care provider. However, a BSE, performed correctly, can also be an effective tool in detecting breast cancer early.

"The best way to get breast cancer diagnosed early and properly is by doing self breast exams," said King.

The BSE should be done about once a month, about five days after the menstrual cycle has ended, said King, who also suggests that women begin these monthly exams once they reach puberty. If you have stopped menstruating it is a good idea to regulate the day of the month you will perform test (the first day of the month, for example). This regular examination schedule will allow you to become more familiar with the contours and general feel of your breasts, which will make it easier to notice any changes.

WebMD and Cleveland prescribe a three-step method of BSE.

#### *In the mirror.*

Begin by undressing from the waist up. Stand in front of a mirror in a well-lit room and look closely at your breasts. If you notice that they are unequal in size or shape, don't be worried. This sort of irregularity is normal. Stand with your arms relaxed at your sides and look for any change in size, shape or texture, or any change in the skin of the breast. Look for any puckering, dimpling, sores or discoloration of the skin. Check the nipples for sores, peeling skin or a change in the direction of the nipple.

Second, put your hands on your hips and press down, tightening the muscles under the breasts. Slowly turn from side to side, carefully inspecting the outer portion of the breasts.

Next, bend forward, toward the mirror, rolling your shoulders and elbows forward. This will tighten the chest muscles and cause your breasts to fall forward. This position will allow you to see any changes in the shape or contour of your breasts.

Then, while clasping your hands behind your head and pressing forward, turn from side to side again, this time paying close attention to the border beneath your breasts. It may be necessary to physically lift your breasts with your hand in order to properly see this area.

The last step in this part of the exam is to check your nipples for any discharge. Pull each nipple outward, squeezing gently between your thumb and forefinger. Look for any clear or bloody discharge.

#### *In the shower.*

With your hands slippery with soap and water, check for any lumps or thickening in your underarms. Place your left hand on your hip and feel under your left arm with your right hand, then repeat on the other side.

Next, check both sides for lumps or thickening above and below the collarbone area.

Finally, support one breast with your hand while using the other hand to feel the tissue. Press gently into the breast using the flat portion of your fingers to follow an up and down motion along the breast from the bra line to the collar bone. Continue this pattern until the entire breast is covered, then repeat on the opposite side.

#### *Lying down.*

After you have finished your shower, lie down with a small pillow under your right shoulder. Place your right hand under your head and your left hand on the upper portion of your right breast. With your fingers together and flat, make small circular motions around the perimeter of the breast. After making a complete circle, move your fingers in one inch toward the nipple and make another circle. Continue this process until the entire breast is covered. Body lotion can be used to make this exam more comfortable.

Lastly, place your fingers flat, directly on top of the nipple, feeling under the skin for any changes. Gently press the nipple inward. It should move easily under your

fingers. Repeat all of these steps on each breast.

"Pain and tenderness have nothing to do with cancerous symptoms," said King, commenting on a common misunderstanding in what symptoms to look for. Lumps and dimpling are the most reliable signs of any cancerous dangers.

A clinical breast exam will include many of the same steps, and should take approximately 10 minutes. The doctor will be more likely to notice possible irregularities, but regular self-examinations are a very important part in early detection and treatment.



### Finding a Lump

The Susan G. Komen

Breast Cancer Foundation ([www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org)) estimates that approximately 80 percent of reported abnormalities are harmless, however, it is important that you report any lump found during self-examinations to your health care provider immediately.

### In Summary

Inadequate self testing is a problem for women everywhere, said King. Even women who are aware of the risks and are familiar with self-testing methods do not perform the tests as often as they should.

"Female Soldiers receive some counseling when they come in for periodic physicals," said King, and literature is available through the Medical Detachment at Camp Rell.

In a society where medical technology has advanced to the ability to cure many of the illnesses that were considered terminal so few years ago, simple self-examinations can save lives. Learning the normal state of our bodies and being able to identify an abnormality quickly can lead to the early diagnosis, treatment and eradication of many such diseases.

The National Cancer Institute and the American Cancer Society suggest that individuals who can identify multiple risk factors for breast cancer talk to their doctors to determine if regular examinations are necessary.

For more on breast cancer or other forms of cancer, contact your health care provider or visit any of the following Web sites:

[www.WebMD.com](http://www.WebMD.com)  
[www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org)  
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)  
[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)



## Focus: *LandWarNet equips Soldiers with battlefield information*

SPC. LORIE JEWELL  
ARMY NEWS SERVICE

Just as Soldiers need the best equipment and training to be successful on the battlefield, a steady diet of information is just as vital, Army leaders believe.

"Information is power," said Brig. Gen. Jan Hicks, commanding general of the U.S. Army Signal Corps and Fort Gordon, Ga. "We want to know things about the battlefield and we want to know things about our enemy on the battlefield. At the same time, we don't want the enemy to know what we know, or to know things about us."

Connecting Soldiers to information they need, whenever they need it and wherever they are, is the job of the Network, recently renamed LandWarNet. It's one of 17 focus areas the Army is emphasizing to win the Global War on Terrorism.

Hicks heads the task force assigned to make recommendations on how best to develop and improve LandWarNet so that it delivers better battle command capabilities to current, future, and joint forces.

The joint aspect is of particular interest, Hicks said.

"We're not going to war as an Army. We're going to war with our Sailor and Airmen friends," Hicks said. "We must be able to communicate with them without an extra step. We need a system that allows one call."

Ultimately, the task force wants to see a LandWarNet that gives combatant commanders the same capabilities for accessing information in any location, whether that's at a desktop computer in their office, in an aircraft, on a vessel at sea, in a

satellites and pull information services down to wherever they are in the world, she explained.

A combination of military and commercial technology powers LandWarNet, with leaders committed to pursuing programs

**"Information is power. We want to know things about the battlefield and we want to know things about our enemy on the battlefield. At the same time, we don't want the enemy to know what we know, or to know things about us."**

*Brig. Gen. Jan Hicks, U.S. Army Signal Corps and Fort Gordon, Ga.*

vehicle en route to battle or in a post-battle camp, Hicks said.

"We're working on different ways to get there," she added.

One of those ways is through the Global Information Grid, or GIG. Hicks describes it as scaffolding built up around the globe.

"Communication lines go all over, pulsing through the GIG," she said. "It services the defense information switch network, or DISN, which is provided by the Defense Information Services Agency."

Forces can reach into the DISN with

that will enhance it even more.

"Our current IT investment strategy is centered on leveraging the best available commercial technology," said Col. James Costigan, director of Combat Development at the U.S. Army Signal Center.

Leaders acknowledge that getting the network to the level the task force envisions is an expensive endeavor. Just how much is still being determined.

"We're talking about an almost clean sweep of the kind of equipment we have now," Hicks said. "It will take a great deal

of money to retool our networks while at war."

Many leaders believe the Army can't afford not to make LandWarNet all it can be, however.

"The application of information technology can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the processes involved in war fighting," said Costigan. "Our experimentation with objective force concepts and our real-world experience in OIF shows us this notion is valid. Investing in IT systems to enable war fighting is therefore logical and necessary."

*(Editor's note: The Army's 17 immediate areas of focus include: The Soldier; The Bench; Combat Training Centers/Battle Command Training Program; Leader Development and Education; Army Aviation; Current to Future Force; The Network; Modularity; Active Component/ Reserve Component Balance; Force Stabilization; Actionable Intelligence; Installations as Flagships; Authorities, Responsibilities, and Accountability; Resource Processes; Strategic Communications; Joint Expeditionary Army with a Campaign-quality Capability; and Logistics. To view a brief synopsis of each area, visit The Way Ahead.)*

## Army posts to grow with BCT (UA) positioning

SGT. LORIE JEWELL  
ARMY NEWS SERVICE

A number of Army installations will grow by several thousand Soldiers in the next few years as a result of decisions on where new brigade combat teams (units of action) will be temporarily based, according to senior Army officials.

Permanent locations will be decided during the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure process, also known as BRAC, the officials said.

"It is an operational necessity right now to build these brigade combat team units of action and get them into the field as quickly as possible," said Brig. Gen. David Ralston, director of force management in the Army's G-3, at a media briefing.

In the thick of fighting the Global War on Terror, the Army is transforming from a division-based force into smaller, more rapidly deployable brigade-based units of action that will provide greater combat power.

Plans call for 43 modular brigade combat teams (units of action), or BCT

(UA)s, to be in place by fiscal year 2006, up from 34 brigades the Army has now.

The National Guard will also transform its current combat force to 34 modular BCT (UA)s, officials said.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, Ga., has reset from three brigades into four BCT (UA)s and is preparing to return to Iraq this winter, officials said.

The 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Ky., will begin resetting this fiscal year, as will the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division at Fort Drum, N.Y.

Those changes are expected to add about 1,400 more Soldiers to Fort Stewart; 300 to Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, Ga.; 400 to Fort Benning, Ga.; 4,200 to Fort Drum; and 3,000 to Fort Campbell.

These numbers are likely to change as the Army continues to implement plans, officials said.

In fiscal year 2005, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Regiment will convert to a Stryker Brigade Combat Team and move from Fort Polk, La., to Fort Lewis, Wash.

That move will add about 3,900 Soldiers to Fort Lewis.

New BCT (UA)s will also stand up at Fort Polk, which will see an overall increase of about 300 Soldiers; Fort Richardson, Alaska, where 2,600 additional Soldiers are

anticipated; and Fort Hood, Texas, which will grow by about 5,000 Soldiers.

The Soldiers will be assigned to the new units of action through cross-leveling, PCS moves, and straight out of advanced individual training, or AIT.

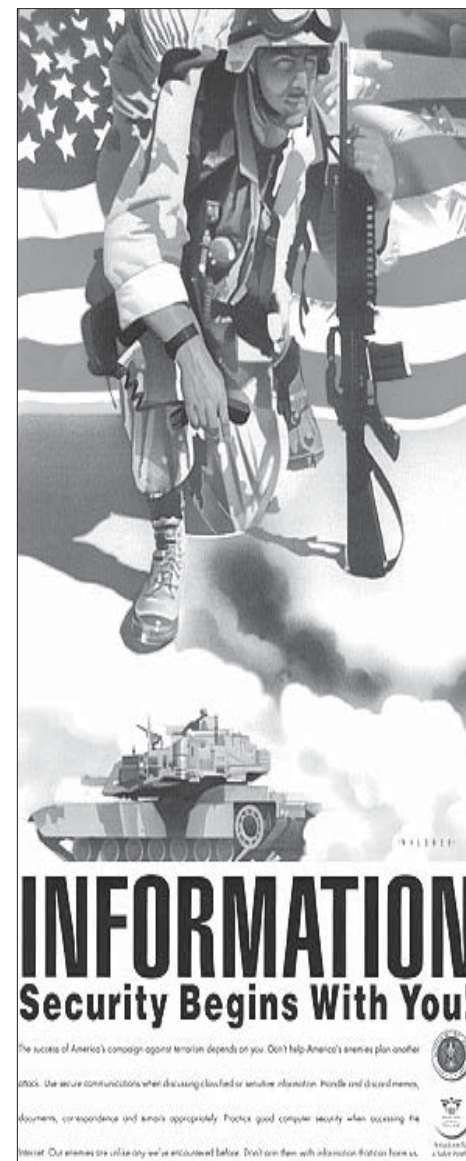
Some will also be transferred from Korea and other overseas locations, and after completing drill sergeant and recruiting tours.

Officials pledged to limit back-to-back combat tours as much as possible.

Once permanently stationed with a new unit of action, the Army will make every effort to allow Soldiers to remain at an installation for up to seven years.

In deciding where to position the new units of action, planners said they considered several factors: the location of an installation in regard to its power projection; its training capabilities; whether its existing infrastructure and the surrounding community could handle an influx of additional Soldiers; and the ability to minimize turbulence to Soldiers and their families.

The Center for Military History is currently examining options for renaming these formations and to decide unit designations.







The family of Lt. Col. Joseph Hammer celebrate his assumption of command of the 103<sup>d</sup> ACS. Pictured are: Brother Mike Hammer, son Joseph Hammer, Lt. Col. Hammer and his wife, Susan. (Photo by Steven Stefanelli)

## 103<sup>d</sup> ACS changes command

LT. COL. PAMELA K. TITUS  
JFHQ-PA

A change of command ceremony for the detachment commander of the 103<sup>d</sup> Air Control Squadron was held on Sunday, Sept. 12, 2004 at Camp Rell.

Assuming command is Maj. Joseph D. Hammer, a traditional guardsman, who joined the 103<sup>d</sup> in 1995. Relinquishing command is Lt. Col. Richard D. Erdmann, who will be retiring at the end of September.

"I am honored, truly honored to take command of the 103<sup>d</sup> Air Control Squadron," said Hammer. "This unit has done extraordinary things over the past few years and set the standard of excellence for Air National Guard units in the United States Air Force."

Hammer highlighted two outstanding features of the 103<sup>d</sup>.

"The first is that the 103<sup>d</sup> Air Control Squadron is truly a family. When it counted most, when our troops were in trouble, you executed, you controlled and you succeeded in getting firepower where firepower was critically needed."

Experienced with ACS in world-wide operations, Hammer brings a wealth of experience to his command.

Responsible for command and control of all aircraft in Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom from April 2003 to August 2003, Hammer led the implementation of radar, radio and data interface systems. Hammer also successfully negotiated and changed the communications architecture for the entire theater which resulted in significantly improved communications and operations in Afghanistan.

Hammer has deployed with the unit several times over the last three years, including twice for Operation Noble Eagle. The first was to protect the President and the other was to the Joint Air Defense Operations Center to protect the Capitol. He was senior Air Force Operations Officer at the JADOC assignment.

"In the upcoming months, we will have several major challenges: moving into a new building, refurbishing our equipment and re-

certifying our operations personnel," said Hammer of what the future holds for the ACS.

"However, our most important focus for the upcoming year will be the Unit Compliancy Inspection. This inspection is a critical measure of how our unit complies with Air Force requirements.

"Despite how we have performed in Operations Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom, the UCI will be the lasting measure of how our unit is perceived throughout the Air Force," he said.

Under Erdmann's leadership, the 103<sup>d</sup> ACS has developed a quality reputation within the ACS community. Erdmann has been activated and led the unit on deployments, including a home-station Operation Noble Eagle assignment starting on Sept. 11 after the terrorist attacks on New York to provide surveillance of the New York area skies, another Operation Noble Eagle deployment for the National Capitol Region defense in the Washington, D.C. area and an Operation Enduring Freedom deployment to Afghanistan.

"My time at the 103<sup>d</sup> has been the most rewarding of my 26 plus years of military service. Not because of Operations Allied Force or Noble Eagle or Enduring Freedom, all of which brought appropriate recognition to the ACS and proved how talented you all are, but because of the unit training assemblies and the annual field trainings and the day-to-day inter-workings of the squadron," said Erdmann.

"The people, the challenges and the off-duty events are what made my time here memorable."

Erdmann reviewed the activities of the unit over the past five years.

"You have all been willing to make great sacrifices for the good of the cause. Your families have been willing to the same as have your employers. Be sure to thank them every single day for what they do to make you successful," he said.

"You are proud. You are dedicated. And you are committed to excellence. I have, and always will be, proud to be associated with this unit."

## Archives not destroying military personnel files

JIM GARAMONE  
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

The National Archives and Records Administration is not destroying any military records, officials in Washington, D.C. said.

The agency is trying to counter an Internet rumor that advised veterans to apply for their Official Military Personnel Files to save them from destruction.

There is no truth to this "urban legend" being perpetuated on the Web. "We heard it about a month ago," said Susan Cooper, the archive's public affairs officer.

The records are stored at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis.

Officials there said that there has been an uptick in the number of veterans requesting their records. This takes time away from other legitimate requests — such as veterans requesting separation documents or medical records.

"We have a limited number of people to do the work and anything that ramps the requests up this quickly is a big production issue with us," said John Constance, NARA's director of congressional and public affairs.

Archivists are digitizing some records, Cooper said. "We are going to digitize some of them for reference and preservation," she said. "When records are handled frequently, it causes some wear and tear. The idea is to preserve (the records), not destroy them." Officials emphasize that the paper records remain intact.

NARA preserves and protects the files because they are permanently valuable records that document the essential evidence of military service for veterans.

Bottom line: If you receive this sort of e-mail, ignore it. Your military records are safe.

Visit the  
Connecticut  
Guardian  
on-line at

[www.ct.ngb.army.mil](http://www.ct.ngb.army.mil)



# DoD allowing more wounded troops to remain on duty

DONNA MILES  
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

The Defense Department has long been a leader in providing employment opportunities to people with disabilities — but it's taken a major step forward by allowing disabled veterans to remain in the military if they want to and can continue to perform, DoD's disability program manager said in Washington, D.C., Oct. 13.

As DoD observes National Disability Employment Month, this year's theme, "You're Hired! Success Knows No Limitations!" takes on particular relevance for servicemembers wounded during the war on terror, Judy Gilliom said during an interview with the Pentagon Channel.

Gilliom said servicemembers with disabling injuries used to be automatically turned over to the Department of Veterans Affairs. If they returned to the Defense Department, it was generally after being medically retired, then hired as civilian employees.

"Now there is much more interest at the very highest levels in keeping anyone who wants to remain in the service as an active-duty member," she said. "And there are some very striking examples of how that has been done."

"With advances in medicine, technology and rehabilitation techniques, we are making every attempt to return willing service members back to duty," said Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness David S. C. Chu. "We are increasing that capability with advances in amputee care, new prosthetic devices, and the new Advanced Amputee Training Center established at Walter Reed (Army Medical Center in Washington)."

President Bush shared this new vision last December during a visit to wounded troops at Walter Reed.

"Americans would be surprised to learn that a grievous injury, such as the loss of a limb, no longer means forced discharge," the president told the Soldiers.

"In other words, the medical care is so good and the recovery process is so technologically advanced, that people are no longer forced out of the military," Bush said. "When we're talking about forced discharge, we're talking about another age and another army. This is a new age, and this is a new army. Today, if wounded servicemembers want to remain in uniform and can do the job, the military tries to help them stay."

Marine Corps Sgt. Chris Chandler is an example of that new age

and new military. Three months into his deployment to Afghanistan in 2001, Chandler stepped on a landmine, which blew off his left foot and lower leg.

But the 23-year-old Marine said he never entertained the idea of a medical retirement.

"I never considered it for a second," he told a reporter from The Bayonet newspaper at Fort Benning, Ga. "Before I could even start to feel sorry for myself, there were people who'd lost their legs who came to talk to me and tell me I could do it."

Last December, Chandler proved them right, becoming the first servicemember with a prosthetic limb to graduate from the Army's Airborne School at Fort Benning.

Another example is Air Force Lt. Col. Andrew Lourake, who injured his left leg during a 1998 motocross bike accident and ultimately had to have it amputated. Lourake, now fitted with a computerized artificial limb, was cleared last summer to return to flight status and will soon be back in the pilot's seat.

"(This will set a) great precedent for the Air Force," Air Force Brig. Gen.

Scott Gray, 89th Airlift Wing commander, told a reporter for the Capital Flyer newspaper at Andrews Air Force Base, Md. "It shows how well the Air Force takes care of their own and how far technology has come to enable this to happen."

Chu called the spirit of these and other wounded servicemembers intent on remaining in the military "an enormous tribute to America's all-volunteer force."

Gilliom said examples like these — once almost unheard of — are occurring with increasing frequency as the military looks beyond traditional conceived notions about what disabled servicemembers can and can't do.

"If you can do it, you can do it," she said. "It's important to let people achieve whatever potential they have to perform."

That, she said, is the whole idea behind the theme to this year's National Disability Employment Month: Success Knows No Limitations!

"There's a lot of interest in being sure that we facilitate that process and help people do what they want to do to adjust to any injury they may have acquired in the course of the global war on terror," she said.

## Memo improves job protection for guardsmen, reservists

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — Attorney General John Ashcroft and Labor Secretary Elaine Chao have signed a memorandum of understanding to ensure employment rights of people returning from military service are vigorously protected.

The memorandum streamlines and strengthens enforcement of the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act of 1994. Congress passed the act to safeguard the employment rights and benefits of servicemembers upon their return to civilian life.

"The brave men and women protected by (the act) voluntarily set aside the comforts of civilian life and stepped in harm's way," Ashcroft said. "We owe it to them to make sure that their employment rights and protections are fully and vigorously protected upon their return. Our (servicemembers) have been there for us, so now it's our turn to step up our efforts for them," Chao said. "This agreement will strengthen enforcement of (the act) by ensuring faster resolution of (its) cases and quicker enforcement action by the government when it is necessary."

The memorandum deals exclusively with each department's role and responsibilities in the enforcement of the act. The attorney general has delegated his responsibilities to the civil rights division of the Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorneys' offices.

The Department of Labor has delegated its responsibilities to the veterans' employment and training service and the office of the solicitor.

The memorandum will streamline the enforcement process, allowing the two agencies to work closely and effectively to ensure the protection of servicemembers' rights. When a complaint raises an "issue of immediate and significant harm" and each agency agrees that the complaint appears legitimate, it may be referred for enforcement immediately, officials said. This prevents two agencies from working on the same issue, wasting time and resources.

Department of Labor officials also issued new regulations strengthening the act's protections. Besides the new regulations, Chao and the DOL's veterans' employment and training services have taken other steps to reduce the rate of violations, including:

— Providing briefings to more than 158,000 servicemembers and others on the act.

— Responding to almost 26,000 requests for technical assistance.

— Distributing more than 240 televised public-service announcements.

— Addressing most of the major human resource and employer organizations.

(Courtesy of American Forces Press Service)



## Sing a song

Sgt. Sonja Kogut, Pfc. Temeka Cole and OC Lauren Sharon don cowboy hats and sing a song at Karaoke provided by Spc. Brenda Scott at the technician picnic at Camp Rell. (Photo by Spc. Jesse J. Stanley, 65<sup>th</sup> PCH)



# Connecticut Military Department News

## Second Company Foot Guard Band concert to aid Waterbury women's shelter

The Second Company, Governor's Foot Guard Band will perform a charity concert Dec. 14 for the benefit of Safe Haven of Greater Waterbury.


The concert will run from from 7 p.m. to about 9 p.m. at Saint John's Episcopal Church, 16 Church Street, Waterbury. The price of admission will be any household item such as toiletries or cleaning products, or a cash donation for Safe Haven, formerly known as Women's Emergency Shelter. Suggested items for donation include toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, paper towels and laundry detergent.

The musical program will include Christmas favorites, patriotic music and light classics. Refreshments will be sold during intermission, with proceeds going to the shelter.

Safe Haven of Greater Waterbury, established in 1978, provides services to victims of domestic violence. These services include emergency housing and transportation, counseling and support groups.

The Second Company band, based in New Haven, includes musicians from New Haven, Hartford and Fairfield counties. The band is conducted by Staff Sgt. Ralph Sherman.

### MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS




#### Honoring Those Who Served

The rendering of Military Funeral Honors is a way to show the Nation's deep gratitude to those, in times of war and peace, have faithfully defended our country. This ceremonial paying of respect is the final demonstration a grateful nation can provide to veteran's family.

Opportunities are available for all Guardsmen to further serve our great country by joining the teams that are providing the final tribute on behalf of our grateful Nation. In addition, receive a day of pay by performing Active Duty Special Work (ADSW) and also earn a full retirement point.

**CONTACT**  
CSM Daniel G. Norkun Jr.  
(860) 493-2718  
or  
SFC Bertrand Saur  
(860) 493- 2773



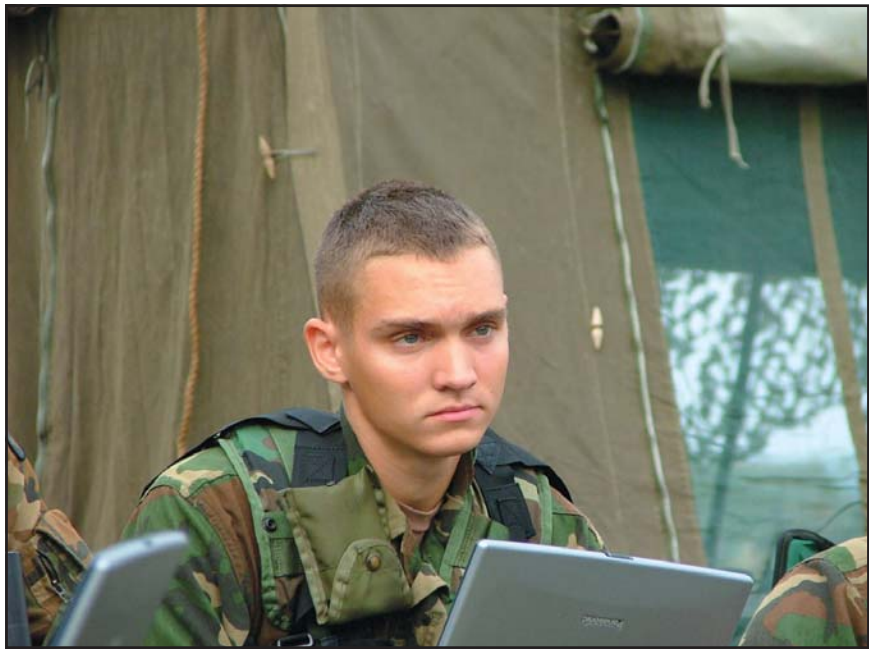
### COMMISSARY & EXCHANGE DIRECTORY

Here is a current directory of area commissaries and exchanges along with their phone numbers. Always call ahead to verify hours as they may change without notice. A valid i.d. card is necessary to use these facilities. Contact your unit administrator if you or your dependants need a card. If you have trouble, contact the State Family Program Office at 1-800-858-2677.

<b>AIR NATIONAL GUARD</b> East Granby TUESDAY – FRIDAY: 10:00 – 5:00 SATURDAY: 10:00 – 4:00 SUNDAY & MONDAY: Closed UTAs: Open Saturday & Sunday: 10:00 – 5:00 Phone: (860) 653-6994	<b>CAMP ROWLAND POST EXCHANGE</b> MONDAY: Closed TUESDAY – SATURDAY: 10:00 – 5:00 SUNDAY: 10:00 – 4:00 Phone: (860) 739-9672	<b>WEST POINT, NEW YORK</b> <b>Exchange</b> Hours: SATURDAY – WEDNESDAY: 10:00 – 6:00 THURSDAY & FRIDAY: 10:00 – 7:00 Phone: (914) 446-5406 <b>Commissary</b> Hours: MONDAY: Closed TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY: 10:00 – 6:00 THURSDAY: 10:00 – 7:00 FRIDAY: 10:00 – 6:00 SATURDAY: 9:00 – 5:00 SUNDAY: 11:00 – 5:00 Phone: (914) 446-5406	<b>SUB BASE, NEW LONDON</b> <b>Exchange</b> Hours: MON., TUES., WED., FRI.: 9:00 – 6:00 THURSDAY: 9:00 – 7:00 SATURDAY & SUNDAY: 9:00 – 5:00 HOLIDAYS: 9:00 – 4:00 Phone: (860) 694-3811 <b>Commissary</b> Hours: MONDAY: Closed TUE., WED. & FRI.: 9:00 – 6:00 THURSDAY: 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. SATURDAY: 8:00 – 5:00 SUNDAY: 10:00 – 5:00 Phone: (860) 694-2244	<b>WESTOVER AIR FORCE BASE</b> Chicopee, Mass. MONDAY – FRIDAY: 10:00 – 5:00 SATURDAY: 10:00- 5:00 SUNDAY: 11:00 – 5:00 Phone: (413) 593-5583
<b>COAST GUARD ACADEMY</b> New London MONDAY – FRIDAY: 9:00 – 5:00 SATURDAY: 9:00 – 3:00 SUNDAY: Closed Phone: (860) 444-8488	<b>COAST GUARD STATION</b> 120 Woodward Avenue New Haven, CT MONDAY – FRIDAY: 9:00 – 4:30 SATURDAY: 9:00 – 2:00 SUNDAY: Closed Phone: (203) 468-2712			<b>ARMY RESERVE CENTER</b> 700 South Quaker Lane West Hartford, CT MONDAY – FRIDAY: 10:00 – 1:00 MONDAY – FRIDAY: 1:45 – 4:00 SATURDAY & SUNDAY: Closed Phone: (860) 236-3393



# Pilots, mechan



Spc. Jake Kaplan concentrates on classes in the field at Fort Sill, where he and the rest of his unit are preparing for overseas duty. (Photo courtesy Company B, 189th AVN)



Capt. Mark Strout addresses his troops during training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. The unit is preparing for Operation Iraqi Freedom. (Photo courtesy Company B, 189th AVN)



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Douglas Duguay is caught in a moment of deep concentration during training for his unit's mission in Iraq. (Photo courtesy Company B, 189th AVN)



A sign of the times at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. (Photo courtesy Company B, 189th AVN)

Spc. JORDAN E. WERME  
65<sup>TH</sup> PCH

Operation Iraqi Freedom is now Soldiers, and Connecticut continuing since the first rotation. Company D of the 189<sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment, way to southwest Asia to join the from all over the country who are

A send-off ceremony for the Soldiers of the 189<sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment, family, friends, colleagues and meet the 50 deploying members of speakers, including Governor M. Richard Blumenthal and Maj. Gen.

The Soldiers of Company B, 189<sup>th</sup> in Air Assault and Air Movement of Company D will provide Aviation Assault battalion.

Sept. 9 marked the actual departure family and media once again gathered

Among the small group who stay roll away and the Blackhawks take whose husband, Sgt. Michael of Company D, was on the bus.

"I found out Aug. 6 (that he was) was sad to think about him going something he really wants to do,

MacDonald's sons, Andrew, 15, see their father off.

"It's a long time for him to be gone

Lori made sure the kids got some their father is following his orders

"He told the boys not to fight. They each other," she said. "(Michael) settle things, so now they'll have

So while Soldiers were saying instructions to their families, Gov. L of her own to the Soldiers she is

"If at all possible I will be here," said Rell. "I can't wait for that day



Members of Company B, 189th Aviation rehearse landings during training at Fort Sill for their deployment helicopters. (Photo courtesy Company B, 189th AVN)



# ...nics to join OIF

...v well into its second rotation of  
ues to provide the support it has  
B and Detachment 1, Company  
Windsor Locks, are now on their  
numerous other servicemembers  
currently on the ground.  
Soldiers was held Sept. 8 at the  
Windsor Locks. Hundreds of  
members of the media gathered to  
F the two units honored by guest  
M. Jodi Rell, Attorney General  
A. William A. Cugno.  
ackhawk pilots, will be involved  
Operations, while the mechanics  
ion Unit Maintenance for the Air

...rture day for the Soldiers, with  
...nering to see them off.  
...ayed long enough to see the bus  
...ke flight was Lori MacDonald,  
MacDonald, a mechanic with

...being mobilized),” she said. “It  
...to think of the time frame. It’s  
...so we have to stand by that.”  
...and Joe, 13, were also present to

...one,” said Andrew.  
...me good advice to follow while  
...S.  
To make sure they get along with  
...el) has always been the one to  
...to learn that for themselves.”  
...goodbye and giving last minute  
Rell made sure to make a promise  
...sending over seas.  
...to greet you (when you return),”  
...y.”



Staff Sgt. Jim Fabian gets a break in the shade of the camo net at Fort Sill. (Photo courtesy Company B, 189th AVN)



Company B, 189th First Sgt. Richard Consolati appears deep in thought during an unguarded moment. (Photo courtesy Company B, 189th AVN)



to Iraq in support of the Global War on Terrorism. The unit operates and maintains Black Hawk



Spc. Heriberto Irizarry takes a few cool moments in the shade of an aircraft to call home from Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Irizarry and his unit are preparing to support the Global War on Terrorism in Iraq. (Photo courtesy of Company B, 189th AVN)



# Social Security FAQ on a weekend drill

## Retirement Planning

COL. GARY G. OTTENBREIT (J6 DIRECTORATE) AND  
ROBERT RODRIGUEZ (PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE - SSA)

Are you saving for your retirement? And, if you are, are you saving enough? Approximately 77 million baby boomers are now middle-aged and should be making serious retirement plans.

- 70-80 percent of current income is needed for a comfortable retirement
- Approximately 40 percent of income is replaced by Social Security (avg. wage earner)
- 45 percent of workers have less than \$25,000 in savings/investments
- Only about 40 percent of workers have calculated their retirement needs
- Almost 60 percent of workers saved more after calculating their retirement needs

If you have not calculated how much you will need to save to enjoy the retirement you dream about, now is the time to start. For more information on retirement planning, visit Social Security's Retirement Planner

at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2/>  
(Data Source: Social Security Administration and 2004 Retirement Confidence Survey.)

### Question:

I plan to retire in a couple of months, as soon as I turn 62. Would I be better off if I apply for Social Security retirement benefits then or, if I can manage to live off of other income, should I wait until my full retirement age to apply for Social Security?

### Answer:

The decision about when to retire is always a personal one because there are so many variables—personal health, family situation, retirement plans, other income sources, etc. Taking Social Security retirement benefits at age 62 would give you immediate income, while waiting until full retirement age could give you more money per month. If you wait until full retirement age, you generally have to live about 10-15 years to make up the money you forego by not taking early retirement.

### Question:

I am planning to retire at age 62 and apply for my Social Security benefits then. But I'm worried that I might become bored, or

need more money than I have budgeted for. What if I change my mind and decide to return to work full time? Am I locked into my decision to take a reduced Social Security benefit?

### Answer:

No, you would not be locked into that decision. Under Social Security, for every \$2 you earn over an annual earnings limit (\$11,640 in 2004), we withhold \$1 from any benefits you are due. But if your earnings are high enough to prevent you from getting any benefits, we will simply stop your Social Security checks until you retire the "second time around."

Or, if you are still working when you reach "full retirement age," you can resume your benefits then because the earnings limitation no longer applies. Also, when your benefits resume, they will be recalculated so you are not penalized with an "early retirement reduction" for those months after age 62 when you did not receive benefits because of your work income.



## INFORMATION Security Begins With You!

The success of America's campaign against terrorism depends on you. Don't help America's enemies plan another attack. Use secure communications when discussing classified or sensitive information. Handle and use e-mail, documents, correspondence and e-mails appropriately. Practice good computer security when accessing the Internet. Our websites are online only when we're introduced below. Don't combine with information that can harm us.

## Officers Club of Connecticut November

**Saturday, Nov. 6**

Notre Dame Lunch and Football  
2 p.m.

**Wednesday, Nov. 10**

NGACT Pre-Holiday Party Benefit for Operation E.L.F.  
5 to 9 p.m.

**Thursday, Nov. 11**

Veterans' Day  
Club Closed

**Wednesday, Nov. 17**

AUSA Veterans' Day Meeting  
6 p.m.

**Friday, Nov. 19**

Italian Night Dinner Dance  
Reservations a must (860) 249-3634  
6:30 p.m.

**Thursday, Nov 25**

Thanksgiving  
Club Closed

**Friday, Nov. 26 - Sunday, Nov. 28**

Club Closed for Thanksgiving Weekend  
Club reopens on Monday, Nov. 29

**To book a party or event, call (860) 249-3624**

## OFFICERS CLUB OF CONNECTICUT



PRESENTS

## ITALIAN NIGHT DINNER - DANCE



Friday November 19, 2004

Cocktails 6:30 Dinner 7:00

### MENU

Antipasto

Sliced Tomatoes w/Fresh Mozzarella Cheese

Minestrone Soup

Osso Buca Milanaise (Veal Shanks)

Filet of Scrod, Scampi Style

wild Mushroom Rissoto Primavera /Egg Plant Roulade

Italian Pane - Three Cheese Garlic/Focaccia,

Dessert

Cappucino Mousse, Assorted Italian Pastries

Coffee & Tea

\$23.95 (plus Tax & Tip)

## Dancing to the Music of Bruno Cerati

with his piano and electronic orchestra for singing and dancing  
to beautiful Italian music as played at  
Sorrento Ristorante every Friday and Saturday  
Reservations please! (860) 249-3634





The program assists elementary and middle school children in science, math and technology. (Photo by Spc. Jesse J. Stanley, 65<sup>th</sup> PCH)

## Second STARBASE opens in Connecticut; first on college campus

Spc. JESSE J. STANLEY  
65<sup>th</sup> PCH

Naugatuck Valley Community College became home to the first STARBASE youth program located on a college campus instead of a military facility. Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, State Adjutant General was there to speak to encourage the children present and cut the ribbon at this new location.

The STARBASE program is a yearly educational outreach program for elementary and middle school children that focuses on science, mathematics and technology. It will enhance the performance, success and personal growth of the youth participating and is sponsored by the

Connecticut National Guard.

The program is structured in five-week academies. Each academy consists of four to five classes Monday – Friday at Naugatuck Valley Community College and at Brainard Field in Hartford, Connecticut.

A 28 class minimum is scheduled during the academic school year with a maximum capacity of 30 students per class. Students attend class one day per week for five consecutive weeks unless otherwise requested by the school district.

Cugno, Dr. Richard Sanders, President of Naugatuck Valley Community College, and State Senator Joan Hartley were instrumental in establishing this second STARBASE location.

# OPERATION E.L.F.



### Home from Iraq or Afghanistan ?

Benefits Counseling Concerns Advocacy Safe Environment Flexible Appointments

New England is a long way from Baghdad, An Najaf, Kabul, and Fallujah. Home does not look the same, sound the same or even smell the same. Readjusting is a challenge for all soldiers! The Vet Center offers a confidential, comfortable place to meet with someone who was there.



We're near you! We will work around your calendar!

Easy Steps to getting in to the Vet Center:

1. Call (800) 905-4675 for the office nearest you.
2. Schedule to meet us at a time that is convenient for you.

Jay White, Hartford Vet Center  
Outreach Specialist  
Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran  
(860) 563-2320  
Serving Connecticut, Mass. and R. I.

Hartford Vet Center  
30 Jordan Lane  
Wethersfield, CT 06109  
Phone: 860-563-2320  
Fax: 860-563-7246

### ATTENTION SHOOTERS!

#### Announcing The CNGB Indoor Combat Pistol and Rifle Matches

Open to **ALL** members of the  
Connecticut Army & Air National Guard  
(Limited to the first 40 registrants per event)

Two events: M16 A2 Rifle and M9 Pistol  
(Using .22 caliber conversion kits at 25 feet)

Location: US Navy Sub Base – Groton, CT (DEC 4<sup>th</sup>)  
US Coast Guard Academy – New London, CT (DEC 11<sup>th</sup>)

Dates: Saturday 04 December 2004 and Saturday 11  
December 2004.

You will be assigned your relay consisting of a two-hour slot. Weapons and ammunition will be provided. Two-hour relays begin at 0800 through 1600 each day.

Register: By **e-mail** indicating which event you wish to compete in and include your **name, rank, unit and phone number**. Also, state what time you prefer to compete. We will contact you once registered.

Send: Registration to **william.dicristofaro@us.army.mil**



# Military Matters



Connecticut  
National Guard  
Soldier-Airman  
Support Center

Supporting Guard Members  
And Their Families

RUDI WILLIAMS  
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

The federal government's Thrift Savings Plan kicked off its 2004 "open season" with slogans to remind members of the uniformed services and civilian government employees that they can increase their retirement coffers substantially by investing in TSP.

Open season — the period when people can enroll in the program or change their options — runs through Dec. 31. "Let It Flow" is this open season's slogan aimed at federal civilian employees, while "Save For Later. Start Now" targets military personnel and other members of the uniformed services. Brochures are being distributed to eligible participants.

More than 85 percent of workers covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System, or FERS, and about 67 percent of employees covered by the Civil Service Retirement System contribute to TSP, a 401K-type savings program.

"As of the end of September, we have more than 1.8 million FERS participants, 475,000 CSRS contributors and 435,000 military participants," said Tom Trabucco, director of external affairs for TSP's overseer, the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board. "All of the money goes into the common fund and is invested by fund, which is more than \$141 billion for military and civilian investors."

Most contributions are invested in five different funds. As of Sept. 30, the Government Securities Investment, or "G" Fund had \$58.8 billion in it; the Common Stock Index Investment, or "C" Fund had \$59.6 billion; the Fixed Income Index

Investment, or "F" Fund had \$10.3 billion; the Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment, or "S" Fund had \$7.6 billion; and the International Stock Index Investment, or "I" Fund had \$4.5 billion.

"This brings the total up to \$141 billion," Trabucco said.

"Open season is a good time make the initial decision on whether or not you will contribute to TSP if you're not currently contributing," Trabucco noted.

"It's also the time to increase your contributions to take advantage of the increased amounts that you're allowed to contribute this year. If you're not contributing the maximum, now is your time to take a look and see if you can or should."

The primary difference between the 2003 and 2004 TSP open season is "you can contribute more this open season," Trabucco noted.

He pointed out that servicemembers can contribute from special pay as well as basic pay. Civilian can contribute only from basic pay.

"In the 2003 open season, which was really for calendar year 2004, the contribution limits were 9 percent of pay, up to a maximum of \$14,000 a year,"

Trabucco explained. "For the current open season, which will cover 2005, eligible employees who are members of the uniformed services may contribute up to 10 percent of pay, to a maximum of \$15,000. Those numbers apply to uniformed services and CSRS employees."

"FERS people may contribute up to 15 percent of basic pay each pay period, but only up to the elective deferral limit of \$15,000 that's set by the Internal Revenue Service," he said.

"FERS people who make more than \$93,333 per year should be concerned about exceeding the \$15,000 limit. If they're in that category, we have a fact sheet on the Web site, along with a worksheet so they can work it out so that they're sure they put in their maximum amount and pick up the maximum matching contributions from the government."

As soon as an employee is covered by FERS are eligible for agency contributions, the agency will automatically contribute an amount equal to 1 percent of the employee's basic pay each pay period, whether or not he or she contributes. If employees contribute their own money, the agency will match the employee's contributions dollar-for-dollar on the first 3 percent the employee contributes each pay period and 50 cents on the dollar for the next 2 percent the employee contributes.

Trabucco pointed out that this may be the last TSP open season, because legislation has passed the U.S. Senate and is in the House of Representatives that would eliminate open seasons in the future. The congressional measure would allow people to make their contribution elections at any time.

"So it's an improvement, and one that we and the participants will welcome," he said.

Trabucco said the board is looking into creating "Lifecycle Funds" beginning next year. These funds provide the benefits of professional asset management to participants who choose them. "That means Lifecycle Funds will be set up based on different years when you would plan on drawing down your account balance,"

Trabucco explained. "We don't know

what those years will be established at yet.

That's part of the procurement process, and we're collecting bids from industry now on how to structure them.

"For instance, there will be a fund that is established for the year 2015, a second fund for the year 2025, a third fund for the year 2035," he said. "What you would do is pick the year in which you plan on beginning to draw down your funds and you simply invest in that. The allocation of those investments would be automatically adjusted over time based on the structure of that life cycle fund — in essence, going from a heavier weighting in stocks in the early years and more toward an investment in bonds and government securities — the more stable investments — as you get closer to the year when you're going to begin drawing those funds down."

TSP participants age 50 or older who are contributing the maximum amount of regular contributions may also elect to make additional "catch-up"

contributions up to \$3,000 for 2004, and \$4,000 for 2005, Trabucco noted.

"Those contributions allow those age 50 and over to put in additional funds.

It will rise to \$5,000 in 2006, where it will remain stable."

Those who choose to make catch-up contributions can do so at any time, but they must make a new election for each calendar year. For more information, they should check with their agency or service TSP representative for guidance about when to submit their election. Civilian employees should use Form TSP-1-C. The form for members of the uniformed services is Form TSP-U-1-C.

## Education Essentials: Army and Air National Guard Education benefits explained

### Connecticut Benefits

The State of Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs web site: <http://www.state.ct.us/ctva/>

The information contained in this web site should be used as a guide to veterans' rights and entitlements.

Due to the brevity of this site, however, it must be understood that it serves only as a guide in an attempt to summarize benefits and programs.

Veterans are eligible for a variety of state benefits.

Eligibility requirements may vary according to the benefits program. At the time a veteran applies for benefits he/she must be a resident of the State of Connecticut.

### Periods of Service

Those who served in the following manner

may qualify for benefits:

Active duty for at least ninety (90) days  
World War II — December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946

Korean Hostilities — June 27, 1950 to January 31, 1955

Lebanon Conflict — July 1, 1958 to November 1, 1958

Vietnam — February 28, 1961 to July 1, 1975  
Berlin Airlift — August 14, 1961 to June 1, 1962

Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm - August 2, 1990 to Present.

Engaged in combat or in combat support role

Demilitarized zone in South Korea after February 1, 1955

Peace-keeping in Lebanon — September 29, 1982 to March 30, 1984

Grenada Invasion — October 25, 1983 to December 15, 1983

Operation Earnest Will — February 1, 1987 to July 23, 1987

Panama Invasion — December 20, 1989 to January 31, 1990

Somalia — after December 2, 1992

Bosnia — after December 20, 1995

### Tuition Waivers

Veterans may attend Connecticut Public Colleges and Universities tuition free.

Connecticut statutes provide that tuition may be waived for qualified veterans attending the University of Connecticut, Connecticut State Universities and the 12 Community-Technical Colleges.

Waivers cover only the cost of tuition for credit-bearing undergraduate and graduate programs.

Other charges, such as for books, student activity and course fees, parking, and room and board, are not waived.

To qualify for a waiver at the University

of Connecticut and Connecticut State Universities, veterans generally must be matriculated, that is, admitted to a degree program.

The Community- Technical Colleges are more flexible. Remember to take a copy of your separation papers with you when applying for admission and registering for courses.

### Tuition Coverage

Tuition waivers for veterans cover 100 percent of tuition for General Fund courses at all public colleges and universities and 50 percent for Extension Fund and Summer courses at Connecticut State Universities.

### How to Qualify

To be eligible for veterans' tuition benefits at any college or university, a veteran must be honorably discharged.





CHIEF MASTER SGT.  
WANDA WAWRUCK

## Enlisted Update

### *'Go to' enlisted leaders ready to help*

"Welcome Home" ...  
"Farewell"; words we've expressed at ceremonies we

hold; sending and welcoming home Connecticut's citizen Soldiers as we fight the Global War on Terror. Events such as these are emotional roller coaster rides for everyone, including our Soldiers, Airmen, and more importantly our families.

You may find Command Sgt. Maj. (Raymond) Zastaury or myself at ceremonies such as these. It is a bitter sweet moment for both of us as we watch our Soldiers and Airmen depart and return from war. But we stand proud knowing that you have spent years training for these difficult times and we know that you are ready.

On the other hand, it is always exciting to stand by your family members with the same pride as you return.

Our positions also require us to interact and attend functions with our Governor, local employers, and State officials. You may ask why, and the answer is simple; we represent you, the enlisted force, by ensuring your quality of life issues are heard. In addition to State participation, our schedule includes traveling on the national level to attend conferences and workshops in support of the enlisted force.

One of the most important meetings is the Enlisted Association for the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) where we have the opportunity to interact with many political and military leaders who work on our behalf to change or enhance federal laws that support increased benefits for all.

We also take great pride in attending awards, promotions, retirements and Professional Military Education (PME) graduations.

The bottom line is; we are your "go to" enlisted leaders to assist you with any issue you may have.

We are not encouraging you to by-pass your chain-of-command, however, while we're out and about in your work areas or attending an event, please take the opportunity to meet us and discuss the issues that are important to you. We will do everything within our power to enlighten you on those issues.

In addition, if you have an idea on enhancing or improving a program we will

gladly work it with the subject matter experts and get you the information promptly.

In addition to taking care of our Soldiers and Airmen, we always take great pleasure in recognizing those who get involved in our many yearly events. We'd like to thank the committee members along with the attendees that made the Senior NCO Dining-In at the Aqua Turf on 7 October a first class event. The Senior NCO Dining-In is the one event that our senior enlisted leaders from all branches of the military services within our State have an opportunity to come together for a night to support our family programs, enjoy a laugh or two, and reflect on the contributions our troops have made over the past year.

With that, we'd also like to thank those who made the visits of Command Sgt. Maj. John Leonard, Senior Enlisted Advisor, National Guard Bureau, and Chief Master Sergeant Dick Smith, Command Chief Master Sergeant, Air National Guard, a memorable one. They are two of the three-person enlisted team at the National Guard Bureau working quality of life issues in concert with our active duty brethren at the State and Federal levels. It was certainly an honor and pleasure to host both during the month of October and we thank everyone for their professionalism and hospitality.

This is also the time of year that we remind supervisors and commanders that the Soldier and Airmen of the Year packages are due soon. This is a great opportunity to recognize those who have gone the extra mile in achieving personal and professional leadership goals. We have had great success with this program and a few of our members have succeeded in capturing national recognition in the past. Let us continue this trend by taking the time to recognize our people through these award programs.

As we close another successful year, we look forward to taking the time to elect our President and Commander-in-Chief and celebrate the holiday season. Please accept my heartfelt thanks to everyone for your vim and vigor in making our organization the best in the country.

Happy Holidays from my family to you and yours...I wish you the best of health and happiness throughout the holiday season.

## Guard Voices

### *Letter from Iraq*

Hello from Iraq.

Recently I had the chance to leave Iraq and return for a short time home to visit my friends and family under the Army's rest and relaxation program. I was told about the opportunity to go on leave in late September but chose not to tell my family that I would be home. I instead hinted that there would be a possibility that I could be home around October first.

I arrived at Bradley Airport after roughly 40 hours of being awake. I picked up my rental car where luckily they ended up giving me an upgrade and went on my mission to surprise my family. I stopped by my father's where I surprised him. At first I scared him because when he saw the uniform he thought something bad might have happened to me. After I reassured him I was fine we had a great visit.

My next stop was to Bic Corporation where my mother works. I arrived in uniform and told the security guard of my plans to surprise my mother. They let me proceed to the front security desk where they paged my mother. When she saw me she burst into tears and hugged me. Then she decided to take the remainder of the night off so we could spend some time together. Seeing home for the first time in months was quite an experience. In the driveway my mother informed me that my brother had the night off of work. Knocking on his door repeatedly was the strategy I chose to surprise my brother. After several minutes of knocking annoyance prevailed and he came to see who was behind the noise. The look on his face assured me he was very surprised to see me.

Throughout the week I had the opportunity to visit with many friends and family. I enjoyed wearing normal clothing. I was amazed to see the explosion of fall colors in drastic contrast to the constant tan of the desert. It was such a great feeling to be able to drive a normal car as opposed to a tactical humvee. That is until I hit my first traffic jam. The normally mundane tasks of grocery shopping came alive as I witnessed all the selections and products that are only available in the United States. I had my first sip of beer with my friends after months of not being able to have any. It seemed like I went out to eat almost every night. I definitely had an incredible time while I was home.

When I was in Iraq I had asked the First Selectman if he would send me a town flag. He sent the flag and I had it raised over Balad, Iraq. When I was on leave I had the opportunity to return that flag to the town of Orange. That flag had been raised in both the United States and in Iraq traveling over 10,000 miles in the process. The flag had quite a journey and it was my honor to return it.

Coming home was a great experience. I really enjoyed seeing my friends and family. My only regrets were that with such a short time I couldn't accomplish everything I wanted to do and couldn't see all of my friends and family. I have only a few months to go in Iraq. After being home I can't wait until I am there to stay.

PAUL TARBOX  
SGT USA  
IRAQ

## *A Month of the Military Family message*

Dear Guard and Reserve Families:

The role of the military family is critical to military success. Guard and Reserve members can stay focused on their mission when they know their families support them in the Global War on Terror. It makes all the difference to a service member when their family understands the sacrifices they make in accomplishing their duties. I thank you for your steadfast backing and support.

As the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs and a member of the Army Reserve for more than 31 years, I personally know the stress and strain that goes with fulfilling my obligation to fellow Soldiers. I also know how my family has reacted over the years and

without their staunch support, I would not have had the opportunity to live the dual role of Citizen Soldier.

I am certain that all Guard and Reserve members appreciate your understanding and support when military duties keep them away from their families. Many service members have told me that the love and caring of their families give them the strength to continue to serve the nation.

Again, I personally thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

LAWRENCE W. HOLLAND  
COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR  
OASD SEVENTH SENIOR ENLISTED ADVISOR  
RESERVE AFFAIRS

Send Letters to the Editor to:

Editor, Connecticut Guardian, National Guard Armory, 360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105-3795

or by email to: ctguardian@ct.ngb.army.mil

All letters must be signed and include a phone number for verification.

Letters may be edited for grammar, spelling and space, but not for content.

Visit the  
**Connecticut Guardian**  
online at [www.ct.ngb.army.mil](http://www.ct.ngb.army.mil)



# Homefront

## In defense of Connecticut's children: *Pay Date*

1<sup>ST</sup> LT. CHRISTOPHER D. MORGAN  
DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION ADMINISTRATOR

Years ago, a conscientious and dedicated staff sergeant took the time to teach my platoon of initial entry trainees how to read a Leave and Earnings Statement (LES).

Despite the good sergeant's professionalism, reading an LES didn't make much sense to me then and I am sorry to admit that not much has changed for me since.

Ordinarily, when I read my LES I focus almost exclusively on the bottom line but recent events have compelled me to revisit the good staff sergeant's teachings and his LES block of instruction.

Specifically, I am drawn to the very significant piece of information exhibited under "Pay Date".

For most, this date signifies one's very first day of paid employment in the military.

But each day I see Connecticut Guardsmen answering the call of their nation in ways that go above and beyond "Pay Date".

Many are preparing to participate in the next rotation of forces going into Iraq and/or Afghanistan.

Their dedication and selfless service

reveal a hidden, deeper significance behind the "Pay Date" box of an LES. Indeed, my "Pay Date" information is the first day of my service in the military but more importantly, this is the day I took my oath to "...Uphold the Constitution of United States of America and to defend it against all enemies, foreign or domestic."

Given these challenge-filled times, the many brave Soldiers answering our nation's call to service are the strongest evidence that the real power of our nation rests not in its superior equipment, superior technology or superior weapons systems but more importantly, in oaths taken and oaths fulfilled.

There is no better example of this than Capt. Anne-Marie Garcia of the Counterdrug Program who is also the company commander of 141<sup>st</sup> Medical Company which mobilized and deployed for Iraq in October.

She has left behind a program she helped build in defense of Connecticut's children for another front in defense of those very same children.

The nation needs her in this fight against terror but will surely miss her dedication and selfless service in the war on drugs.

True to form though, in answering her call to shift fronts, she is leading the Counterdrug



Program, as always, by example and revealing to all of us the real meaning behind "Pay Date".

If you have any questions about other Drug Free events or Educational & Leadership Programs please call @860-493-2724 and ask for 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Christopher Morgan.

## New law sinks 'check floating' practice

CAPT. CHARLES WARREN  
12TH FLYING TRAINING WING LEGAL

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFPN)—The practice of "floating" a check until payday became a thing of the past Oct. 28 when the new federal Check Clearing for the 21st Century Act, also known as Check 21, went into effect.

"Check floating" occurs when people write checks a few days before payday, figuring that by the time their checks hit the bank, there will be money in the accounts to cover them.

With Check 21, money will be withdrawn immediately from a person's account when he or she writes a check.

The new federal law is designed to help banks efficiently process more checks electronically. This means that debits to a person's checking account will occur in minutes, not days.

Paper checks as record-keeping devices will also become a thing of the past. Instead, banks will replace canceled checks with substitute checks — paper copies of electronic images of a person's original check. Consumers must have a substitute check to exercise all of their rights under Check 21 for the recrediting of their account in the event of a transactional error.

The potential effect on consumers is simple. Unwary consumers will be more likely to bounce checks because of the enhanced speed and efficiency of check processing.

Consumers probably will not be able to access funds from checks deposited in their accounts any sooner because the new law does not shorten check hold times for banks. This means people may not be able to withdraw money from their accounts the same day a deposit is made.

Here are a few tips to help people adjust their banking habits in response to Check 21:

— Check your balance. Ensure you have sufficient funds in the checking account to cover any purchases made by check.

— Request substitute checks. Although banks are not required by law to issue them, be persistent in requesting that substitute checks accompany bank statements.

— Ask for a re-credit in writing. If a loss is related to a substitute check received, notify the bank in writing within 40 days of the bank statement and request a re-credit to the account. Do not forget to include the substitute check.

For more information about Check 21, visit the Consumers Union or the Federal Reserve Web sites. You can also contact a legal assistance attorney at the base legal office. (Courtesy of Air Education and Training Command News Service)

## Chaplain's

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CHAPLAIN KEVIN P. CAVANAUGH

November is the time when we traditionally thank God

for the blessings of family, community and freedom.

As a nation, we set aside one day to express our gratitude to God (although at times God gets overlooked in the pursuit of turkey and touchdowns.)

It is important to remember that God is working in our lives every moment of every day — and that every good thing that comes to us comes from Him.

I'm reminded of a story about a man named Sam. Sam lived in a two story house near a river in the Midwest.

One spring there was a tremendous amount of rain and the river began to flood. As the water rose higher Sam's prayers for deliverance grew more fervent.

He was a good Christian, and he felt that God owed him one.

As both the rain and the prayer continued, members of the local fire department arrived in a four-wheel drive and offered to take Sam to safety.

## 'Hey God — Aren't you listening?

"Thanks anyway," Sam replied, "but I'll be fine. God will protect me." Several days later the firemen returned — this time with a boat.

"No need to build an ark, Sam, let us take you to dry ground," the captain offered. But Sam held fast; he *knew* God would answer his prayer.

The dam burst and the waters continued to rise, and soon Sam and his prize parakeet were on the roof.

The National Guard hovered overhead in a vintage UH-1 (they didn't have *any* Blackhawks.)

"Let us drop you a line," they pleaded. But Sam was not to be moved. He and his parakeet would be just fine.

A day later, Sam found himself standing outside the pearly gates leaning on the bell with some annoyance.

Saint Peter opened the gates and invited him in. But Sam wasn't so sure that he wanted to go in; he was pretty ticked at the Lord.

"I've been a good Christian, I prayed from the day that the flooding started, I trusted God would answer my prayer—and here I am! What gives?"

Putting his arm around Sam's shoulders, Peter said: "Sam you just don't get it, do you?"

I know that you prayed and — and God *answered* your prayer. He sent you an SUV, a boat and a National Guard helicopter, for Pete's (my) sake. What more did you want?"

Like many of us, Sam failed to see God working through other people.

He expected God to miraculously remove his problem, rather than sending him the help that he needed to work through it.

God was with him, offering help all along, but Sam didn't see it.

God always hears our prayers, but sometimes in ways that we might not expect or understand. God is ever present, ever watchful and ever caring.

This year as we enjoy Thanksgiving Day, let us all remember that it is God that we are thanking, for every good and every blessing that we enjoy comes from Him.





# New class starts About Face program

Spc. Jesse J. Stanley  
65<sup>th</sup> PCH

The About Face Academy for out-of-school youth kicked off the beginning of another class October 7 at the Waterbury Armory.

The academy is a job readiness and life skills training program designed to prepare the students to gain and maintain employment and guide them to success in both the workplace and life.

Businesses in the Waterbury community place the students into intern positions, which they are compensated for. While working for the local business the students train and work as a regular employee.

The business in turn documents the student's performance and transferable skill attainment. The program uses this to identify the student's strengths and weaknesses in and effort to assist them with job attainment and acquisition.

Once a week the students travel to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Co. Governor's Horse Guard in Newtown,

Conn. There they get hands-on experience working on a farm with horses.

The program runs Monday through Friday and consists of students ages 18 – 21 from Waterbury. The current class has eight students enrolled.

"I am looking forward to setting my goals in life," Damar Clinton said. "This is a start so I can get a good feel for where I am going. I hope the program can help me get my Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) License."

The students hear about the program through fliers in the community, past students or family.

"I saw a poster about it in my guidance office at school," Neticia Eson said.

"The About Face program is about opportunity and also about teamwork," Capt. Lynda Thornton, About Face program manager, said.

"The youth of Connecticut are our future," Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, State Adjutant General, said. "It is our civic duty to support them."



Students in the new About Face class are ready to tackle the challenges before them and prepare for their future. (Photo by Spc. Jesse J. Stanley, 65<sup>th</sup> PCH)

## Attention Soldiers, Airmen and Families

### The Connecticut Guardian wants your photos!

If you have photos you wish to share with the rest of our Guard family, we would like to publish them in the Guardian.

We are looking for photos of soldiers and airmen who are deployed either relaxing or working. We are looking for photos of family members at home or at play. We are looking for photos of families packing care packages to send to their loved ones. We will print them in the Guardian as space allows so they can be seen and shared by Connecticut Soldiers, Airmen and families around the world.

Please e-mail your photos to [ctguardian@ct.ngb.army.mil](mailto:ctguardian@ct.ngb.army.mil)

## Ever thought of becoming a TAC (Teach, Asses, Counsel) Officer or NCO?

### Strengthen your skills in these and other areas:

Teaching  
Counseling  
Small Unit Leadership  
Planning and Conduct of Training  
Mentoring

TAC Qualification Course  
17-21 NOV 04  
Camp Rell  
Niantic, CT



For additional Information Contact  
1LT Shaun O'Dea  
(860) 691-4216  
[Shaun.odea@ct.ngb.army.mil](mailto:Shaun.odea@ct.ngb.army.mil)



PLEASE JOIN US  
for a



PRE-HOLIDAY PARTY  
to benefit

OPERATION E.L.F.

Sponsored by the  
NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION  
OF CONNECTICUT

Wednesday, Nov. 10, 2004  
5 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Officers' Club of Connecticut  
Hartford Armory  
\$15 per person

includes hors d'oeuvres and donation to Operation E.L.F.  
to help support families of Connecticut's deployed  
Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines

Please RSVP to Debbi Newton NLT Monday, Nov. 8 at  
[debbi.newton@ct.ngb.army.mil](mailto:debbi.newton@ct.ngb.army.mil) or by phone at (860) 548-3251  
Make checks payable to NGA CT and put Operation E.L.F. in the  
memo section.



# Guarding Your Rights

## Legal Affairs: Notary Publics

PFC. JOSEPH BROOKS  
OSJA LEGAL ASSISTANT

The Office of the Notary Public has a long and proud history dating back to the early days of the Roman Empire. The first notary publics were scribes with the highly specialized skill of reading and writing. In ancient times they had the responsibility of creating a legal written record of all major business transactions. They often created the only written record of commercial transaction, disposition of property and court records.

The first American notary public was appointed in New Haven, Connecticut in 1639. Thomas Fugill was appointed to public office by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Today the office of the Secretary of the State for the State of Connecticut has the power to appoint notaries for the State of Connecticut.

Times may have changed and the skill of reading and writing are now nearly universal but the job of a notary public has changed very little. The primary duty of a notary public is to provide acknowledgements for signed documents. An acknowledgement is simply making sure that a person is properly signing a document with their correct name and that they are signing a document of their own free will. Once the notary ensures that these conditions have been met and they witness

a signature, they place their seal on the document to make it official.

Acknowledgements are performed for various documents. The most common documents acknowledged by a notary public are land title deeds, bills of sale, wills, "living wills" and powers of attorney.

More uncommon duties of a notary such as taking oaths or affidavits, certifying true and attested copies of documents, taking depositions and issuing subpoenas are reserved to those notaries who are employed by an attorney. Notaries who are under the direct supervision of an attorney can perform these duties and are usually trained in the duties of a legal assistant.

A notary cannot give any legal advice in regard to the document being signed nor can they assist in completing legal forms. It is not in the notary's capacity to explain the benefits or consequences of signing a document. The notary can suggest that a person seek legal advice from an attorney but they cannot refuse to acknowledge a document if all of the conditions have been met.

The process for becoming a notary for the State of Connecticut is simple. To qualify to become a notary a person must be at least 18 years old and be a resident of the State of Connecticut or have their "principal place of business" in the state. The person must also demonstrate that they are competent to hold

a position of public trust.

If all of these conditions are met, then the person seeking appointment must contact the Office of the Secretary of the State to request an application for appointment.

The applicant is sent a packet of information regarding the rules and regulations that govern notaries, an application and a test. The applicant is permitted to review the regulations and complete the test at their own leisure. The applicant then sends the application and the test back to the Office of the Secretary of the State with a check for \$60. If the applicant completed all of the information and passed the test they will receive their appointment by mail. If they fail the test the fee is non-refundable.

Any person who is interested in becoming a notary public is invited to contact the Office of the Secretary of the State at (860) 566-5273, or in writing to Secretary of the State's Office, 30 Trinity Street, Hartford, CT 06106. All information for this article was compiled from the Connecticut Notary Public Manual.

*This article is not intended as and does not constitute legal advice. Specific legal issues are unique to each person and factual situation. Persons with legal issues are encouraged to personally consult an attorney.*



## NGACT: Working for you



With the elections over, the National Guard Association of Connecticut can now start looking towards building an even stronger working relationship with our state and federal lawmakers than we've already been fortunate enough to enjoy.

We had a fairly successful year last year and look to having an even more successful year this year. We now wait for our proposed legislation to work its way through the process of being written and sent forward. When everything is finalized and ready to go to the state or national legislatures, we will let you know, and will be asking for your help in getting it passed.

In addition to our increased legislative efforts, we are gearing up for some very active months ahead.

Our state conference will once again be held in March. We are looking at returning to a more central location, perhaps in the Meriden area, to hold this year's conference to make it more easily accessible to a larger number of our members.

We are also going to include the EANGUS Area I Caucus in the plans for the weekend, thus drawing fellow enlisted association members from the eight-state region as well as national leadership to our conference. We also have other innovative ideas to bring the conference forward and make it better than it has ever been.

The NGACT has several positions on its Executive Board up for election this year. They are: Army and Air Officer, Army and Air Enlisted and Retiree Representative. If you have an interest in running for any of these positions, get in touch with any current board member or call our office at (860) 247-5000 and leave a message. The Executive Board meets on the second Wednesday of every month in the NAGCT office at the Hartford Armory. Meetings begin at 5:30 p.m. and are open to anyone who has an interest in learning more, or who has issues they would like to discuss.

Sgt. Maj. (Ret.) Joe Amatruda has tendered his resignation as Executive Director of NGACT. Joe served the board for many years in a variety of positions and we will certainly miss him and wish him the best.

We are working on a job description and will be putting a notice soon lookign for a replacement, but in the meantime, Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Anthony Vallombroso has stepped up to the plate to help us out. Thank you, Tony!

A final note: On Wednesday, Nov. 10, NGACT will sponsor a Pre-Holiday Party at the Officers' Club in Hartford to benefit Operation E.L.F., a holiday program benefiting the the families of our deployed servicemembers. Please join us for an evening of fun, friends, food and frivolity.



RONALD E. LEE, 1<sup>st</sup> SGT. (RET.) USAR  
CT-ESGR PUBLIC AFFAIRS CHAIRMAN

On Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, State Chairman Lewis P. Vasquez and several members of the Connecticut Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (CT-ESGR) staffed a booth at the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Annual Expo at the Cromwell Radisson Hotel in an attempt to reach out to municipal employers in attendance who may have employees serving in the National Guard or a branch of the Reserve Components.

Numerous attendees visited the booth and talked about a wide array of topics regarding the military. It was explained that CT-ESGR is a volunteer Department of Defense agency working to educate National Guard and Reserve members and their employers about their rights and responsibilities under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), a Federal law – Title 38, United States Code, Chapter 43.

A special effort was made to seek out municipal CEOs, Mayors and First Selectmen, in order to explain ESGR to them

## CT-ESGR reaches out to municipal employers

and to invite them to sign a "Statement of Support" for the Guard and Reserve. These top-level officials were more than happy to register their support by signing a Statement that they would join other employers in pledging that

- 1) Employment would not be denied because of service in the Guard or Reserve;
- 2) Employee job and career opportunities would not be limited or reduced because of service in the Guard or Reserve;
- 3) Employees will be granted leaves of absence for military service in the Guard or Reserve consistent with existing laws without sacrifice of vacation; and
- 4) that the agreement and its resultant policies would be made known throughout the municipality.

A few First Selectmen asked if they could do more to show their support and some showed interest in volunteering to become a member of the ESGR Committee.

Overwhelming support was voiced and many stated that nearly all of the stories they had heard from their employees who have been deployed in the War on Terrorism and had now returned to work were much more

positive than what is generally published by the news media. It goes without saying that everyone is proud of our military and stands behind them in their efforts.

You too can help maintain a good working relationship between yourself and your civilian employer. It's important that both you and your employer know about the general provisions of USERRA since you both have specific rights and responsibilities. By communicating with your employer about your military service you'll find it easier to perform military service away from your workplace.

We ask that you nominate your employer for a "My Boss is a Patriot" award and ask them to consider signing a "Statement of Support." This is the time to develop a united front that will support the relationship in the future.

Please contact the Connecticut Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve by calling (860) 721-5901 for any assistance needed or for more information on the "My Boss is a Patriot" and "Statement of Support" programs.



## Inside OCS

### *The importance of family support during Officer Candidate School*

OC LAUREN J. SHARRON  
OCS CLASS 50

Everyone knows that family is one of the most important parts of being in the military. It is your support system, what helps you get through the tough times in life.

The military stresses the importance of family and the family support system. Family Day is one way that the military encourages family support of their Soldiers.

This year, the Connecticut National Guard Family Day was Sept. 11, 2004. All Connecticut National Guard Soldiers and Airmen met at Camp Rell with their families to join in the festivities.

Officer Candidate School Class 50 had a big involvement in the festivities for Family Day.

The Officer Candidates got to take part in the skydiver-flag ceremony with Governor M. Jodi Rell and Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno.

An American flag that had been flown over Iraq and Afghanistan by our fellow troops was handed off by the skydiver to OC Hibbert who gave it to the general.

The flag was then passed to Governor Rell and then to OC Rossi who sprinted across the parade field to bring the flag to the flagpole.

The rest of OCS Class 50 hoisted the flag up the flagpole while the Star Spangled Banner was heard across the parade field, sung by the Army Chorus.

This whole ceremony gave the class a sense of pride to be able to take part in this event as our family members, and the family members of so many other Soldiers, watched from the side.

I could see my mother and father out of the corner of my eye while I was doing the flag ceremony. They had such a proud look on their faces, as did many of the other family members that looked on.

My parents took a break from the Italian Festival that they were working at in Norwich to come down to the festivities so they could spend some time with me. My parents have been one of my biggest support systems since I joined the military.

At first, my mother did not even want me to join the military and my father had his doubts.

Since I have been in, however, they have supported all of my decisions about the military, including my decision to join Officer Candidate School.

Since the day I joined the military my father had wanted me to do ROTC. He was very disappointed when I decided not to do it while I was going for my Bachelors Degree.

When I decided that I wanted to go to Officer Candidate School, he was thrilled that I was finally taking the step to become an officer. Once I explained what OCS was and how it worked, he and my mother have been very supportive of me.

They were so disappointed that they were on vacation when I was being interviewed on the news during OCS Phase I, but they were so excited when they got to see the tape of the interview.

Neither of my parents are, or were, in the military, but they were both in their twenties during the Vietnam Era. They understand the importance of being supportive of your fellow countrymen and women.

They do not always understand what I

am talking about when I start throwing military jargon around, but they ask questions and try to understand because they know it is important to me.

I want my parents along with my husband to be the people to pin me at my commissioning ceremony when I finish Officer Candidate School in July of 2005. I want them to be there to support me as they have been doing for my military career so far.

My parents have given so much to me by way of support that I want them to be involved in any way that they can.

They should be able to share in the feeling of pride that I will be feeling as they pin that gold bar on my collar.

If you are interested in buying the "Support your Troops" magnets that you see around, contact any member of OCS Class 50.

If you are interested in joining OCS Class 51 or if you have any questions, please contact me at Training Site Detachment at (860) 691-4271 or by Nextel at (860) 883-4518.

## Why Diversity?

### Celebrating Hispanic Heritage with music and education

Pfc. JOSEPH BROOKS  
65<sup>TH</sup> PCH

On Oct. 15, the Connecticut National Guard, in association with the United States Postal Service and Central Connecticut State University, hosted the annual Hispanic Heritage Month celebration at CCSU's Welte Auditorium.

The event featured a wealth of sights and sounds designed to immerse the audience in Hispanic culture and to give thanks for the many contributions made by the Hispanic community throughout the history of the United States.

Brig. Gen. I.J. Zembrzuski, assistant adjutant general, delivered a message on behalf of the Connecticut National Guard. Zembrzuski celebrated the profound achievements of Hispanics in the creation of this country and in the advancement of the United States military. His remarks included a brief message of welcome and thanks, spoken in Spanish.

A special slide show detailing the significant contributions of Hispanics in American history, including military and political contributions, was presented by the CTARNG. The presentation provided a detailed account of men and women of Hispanic descent, both past and present, who have shaped this country and fought for its freedom.

The Honorable Evelyn Mantilla, state

representative, Hartford's 4<sup>th</sup> assembly district, was the event's special guest speaker. Mantilla is serving her third term as state representative and has pioneered several programs to benefit the Latin American community of Hartford. Mantilla spoke of her personal experiences as a child and of her belief that a good education is the key to the success of Latin American youths. She challenged each member of the audience, mostly students from area schools, to succeed in his education and to make a difference in his community and to remember the importance of voting. This message carried to a presentation made later in the event.

Victor Olivares, Jana Iparraguirre and Viviana Puchi were awarded for outstanding essays written as part of an essay-writing contest sponsored by the USPS. Olivares, a student at Six to Six Magnet School, Bridgeport, was the award-winning essayist for the fifth grade category. Iparraguirre, a student at the Phoenix Academy, Fairfield, wrote the award winning essay for the seventh grade category. Puchi, a junior at Hamden High School, Hamden, won the award for the high school age group. All three students were presented with certificates from the USPS and the Adjutant General's coin for excellence by Zembrzuski.

The Hispanic Heritage Celebration also included performances of traditional and modern Hispanic music and dance, as well as

a sampling of traditional Hispanic foods. The special guest performers of the event were Val Ramos, a renowned flamenco guitarist, and Sandra Hernandez, a nationally recognized flamenco dancer, performed two sets of music and dance as part of the annual event.

Lillianette Rodriguez, Ms. Puerto Rico for the State of Connecticut, was present to congratulate the award recipients. Rodriguez had a special message for the award winners. "Never give up your dream, keep up your studies because you are the future."



Ms. Puerto Rico, Lillianette Rodriguez poses with the award winners Jana Iparraguirre, Victor Olivares and Viviana Puchi. (Photo by Pfc. Joseph Brooks, 65<sup>th</sup> PCH)



# Health & Fitness



## Medical Notes



## Occupational hearing conservation

LT. COL. JAY HANS  
CCC/A, F.A.A.A. CLINICAL AUDIOLOGIST

(Source: USACHPPM)

**Hearing loss** is one of the most pervasive occupational health problems in America today. Millions of workers are exposed on their jobs to noise levels that are potentially hazardous to their hearing.

Fortunately, noise-induced hearing loss can be prevented, through the consistent use of hearing protection devices.

With the disciplined use of hearing protection, people are spared disabling hearing impairments and evidence suggests that they may experience less fatigue and generally better health.

### Benefits to you

The most obvious benefit to wearing ear protection is that it saves your hearing and ability to communicate. Because noise-induced hearing loss usually creeps up slowly, many individuals are unaware of their impairment until it is too late. Moreover, this hearing loss represents permanent damage that cannot be restored through medical/surgical treatment.

Another benefit reported by people in organizations with effective hearing loss prevention programs is that they generally feel better; less tired and irritable. They sometimes report that they sleep better at night, and they are no longer bothered by temporary reductions in hearing ability at the end of the day, or by the tinnitus (ringing in the ears) that often accompanies the development of noise-induced hearing loss. There is also evidence that long-term noise

exposure may contribute to stress-related disease, especially cardiovascular disease. By reducing noise, the chances of other health impairments are consequently controlled and reduced.

Noise reduction and maintenance of hearing sensitivity can benefit safety because people are better able to communicate, and to hear alarms and warning shouts. Good hearing is essential for more subtle warning signals, such as a malfunctioning machine or changes in the ambient sound environment in the field.

In summary, diligence in hearing protection is consistent with good health and mission effectiveness. At a minimum, you benefit with good hearing. Reductions in noise exposure may also result in less fatigue and irritation, and possibly fewer stress-related health complaints. Reduced noise exposures also can be associated with improved morale, and, in some cases, higher efficiency.

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### Your Responsibilities

Ultimately, each individual must make efforts to be fully informed, to obtain help when necessary, and to assume responsibility for wearing their hearing protectors. Everyone must consciously develop personal habits and strategies for wearing their hearing protection. Otherwise, it becomes too easy to succumb to the constant barrage of opportunities to misuse personal hearing protectors, thereby risking exposure to harmful levels of noise.

Select your hearing protection device appropriately for the level of noise. There may be instances when multiple devices are required,

such as the use of foam earplugs AND earmuffs near some operating jet engines.

Proper utilization of personal hearing protection has a critical impact on hearing loss prevention. Recognize the importance of wearing your hearing protector whenever you are exposed to hazardous noise. Removing a hearing protector for only a few minutes can dramatically reduce its effectiveness.

To achieve the maximum benefit, make sure to wear hearing protectors correctly. The differences between the maximum protection theoretically possible, and the

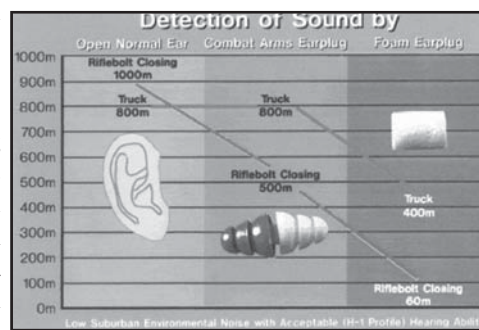
protection usually obtained in the "real world" are influenced by many factors. Failure to correctly insert an earplug or adjust an earmuff, are arguably the chief culprits responsible for diminished real world hearing protection. Thus, even when issued a correctly-sized hearing protector, and trained in its use and care, it is quite possible you could receive little or no effective hearing protection because of faulty fit. Resolve to wear hearing protection correctly or risk the ability to prevent harmful noise from damaging your hearing.

Part of your responsibility toward wearing hearing protection is to cultivate a vigilant attitude. Expect your hearing protectors to slip or work lose over a period of time. Periodically check to see if earplugs or earmuffs need to be readjusted to maintain a reliable fit.

Hearing protectors break and become worn. Check your protector regularly and seek repair or replacement whenever necessary. Lastly, encourage others to use hearing protection and to seek help when they have problems. Guard against acquiring a false sense of safety. You CAN prevail over most hearing health hazards if you:

- 1) Properly wear hearing protectors,
- 2) Exercise a commitment to wear hearing protectors consistently, and
- 3) Maintain hearing protectors by repairing or replacing them when necessary.

If you have questions about your hearing or noise exposure Contact Lt. Col. Hans at MED DET 5 at (860) 691-4257.



## Fit for Life: Fitness first piece of puzzle to healthier lifestyle

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS CHRISTIE PUTZ  
92ND AIR REFUELING WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

"It makes you feel better."

"It reduces stress."

"It lowers blood pressure."

"Pick up any fitness magazine, and it'll give you a bunch of boring definitions of what fitness will do for you," said John Gahagan, 92nd Services Squadron fitness center director at Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash.

But to him, fitness means something a little different: a higher quality of life.

"When you go home from work, and all you want to do is sit on the couch instead of playing with the kids because you're so tired, you're probably out of shape," he said. "And unfortunately, it's not only you (who's) suffering from your bad habits."

Also, people who are not physically fit can potentially be a hazard to themselves, Gahagan said.

For example, someone who cannot swim to shore after his or her boat capsized is likely to drown. Someone who cannot jump out of a two-story building to evade a fire is likely to burn. And someone who is too large for emergency medical services to pull out of a wrecked car is likely to die.

Although it may sound frightening, there is help.

"Just as most diseases are preventable, so are a lot of injuries," Gahagan said.

For this and the myriad other reasons why fitness is important, fitness center staffs help patrons, whether beginners or seasoned runners or lifters.

"We're first going to want to know what (a person's) goal is; whether it's to lose weight,

tone up, bulk up or just feel better," he said. "Then we'll assess (his or her) health status."

Their assessment includes a series of questions, body-fat test, weight measurement and a quick test of aerobic capacity, weight training and flexibility. It gives the staff a better idea of what the person's current fitness level is, and what he or she is capable of.

"Basically, we'll see where you are, where you want to go, and then we'll design a program to help you meet your goals," Gahagan said.

To assist in this, there are personal fitness trainers on the staff to help beginners get acquainted with the machines and facility. In addition, follow-up visits are scheduled to make sure the person is on the right path, and if necessary, to alter the plan.

"In as little as one hour a day, three times a week, you can be in much better shape than you are now if you don't workout," he said. "It's not that big of a commitment."

But commitment is what gets most people in trouble. With busy schedules, some people claim they just do not have enough time.

"Make an appointment with yourself," Gahagan said. "Put it on your calendar, block it off, and don't let yourself schedule anything during that time. If you treat it like any other appointment on your schedule then you'll always have time."

The problem is that most people do not make fitness a priority in their lives, he said.

"I hear it over and over, 'I want to get in shape,' 'I want to tone up,'" he said, "but it's all 'want' and not enough 'do.' Unless you put it on your schedule, make it a priority and make it a habit, it's not going to happen."

With what fitness does for the body, and most importantly, the higher quality of life someone can get out of it, now is the time to become physically fit, Gahagan said.



# Tradition, gratitude, humor at Dining-In

STAFF SGT. CAROLYN A. ASELTON  
103<sup>RD</sup> FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS NCOIC

SOUTHINGTON – Connecticut National Guard senior NCOs celebrated their units' successes and heritages during a dining-in at the Aqua Turf Country Club here Oct. 7.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Senior Noncommissioned Officers' Dining-In brought together 266 officers and senior NCOs of the state Army and Air National Guards, as well as few from the Coast Guard, Navy and Marines for a night of ceremony and fellowship.

There were many highlights and good cheer throughout the evening, as with a traditional dining-in, to include the punchbowl ceremony, fines and toasts.

After a cocktail hour with music provided by the 102<sup>nd</sup> Army Band, guests gathered informally around a table at the front of the room for the punchbowl ceremony. There, 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeants Peter Jarvis, HQ Co., 1/102<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion, and Art Fredericks, C Co., 1/102<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion, combined various liquors, syrup and sand in traditional "grog."

"It is thought that during the years of the Westward Expansion, cavalry troopers would share spirits that they begged, borrowed and stole as they moved about on the frontier," Mr. Vice, Master Sgt. Bryan H. Gran, HQ 1/102<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion, said as the ceremony began. He then explained the symbolism of each ingredient as a first sergeant added it.

An honor system, as well as direction from the dining-in principals, kept members reaching into their pockets for dollars to pay fines when they had incurred protocol infractions. Some even owed money upon

arrival. Anyone who incorrectly completed his R.S.V.P. had a debt upon arrival. Standard violations throughout the night varied from addressing the mess without proper recognition, uniform violations, improper toasting procedures or leaving the dining area without permission of the president of the mess or Mr. Vice.

Glasses were raised in traditional toasts to the nation's president, the governor, and the queen of England. As the night went on, members toasted their units. Any error in unit history brought a fine. Good-natured needling is encouraged at dining-ins, and this one had its fair share, with several members dropping dollars with a smile. All donations went to the Connecticut National Guard Foundation, which provides

assistance to state Guard families in need.

Command Sgt. Maj. John J. Leonard, Jr., Senior Enlisted Advisor, National Guard Bureau, was the evening's guest speaker. He thanked the senior NCOs for their leadership, training and mentoring.

"The success of Soldiers and Airmen today is due to you," he said.

Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, Adjutant General, Connecticut, recognized the Airmen of the Year, Soldier of the Year, and NCOs of the year, who were guests of honor and sat at the head table.

All was not festive, though, as the fallen were remembered, and guests were reminded through toasts and speeches of the more than 350 guardsmen currently deployed.



Members of the mess at the Senior NCO Dining In partake of the grog mixed during the traditional Punch Bowl Ceremony. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Carolyn Aseltan, 103rd FW Public Affairs)



Members of the mess were on their honor to pay fines levied for a variety of infractions of the rules of the mess at the Senior NCO Dining In. Attendees were fined for such things as uniform violations, filling out their RSVP forms incorrectly, showing up late, speaking out of order and a variety of other reasons. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Carolyn Aseltan, 103rd FW Public Affairs)

## Anthrax program halted

From Page 1

"We'll be able to say more about what will happen after that's done."

Despite the pause in the program, those servicemembers who have begun the vaccination program will continue with it once the injunction is lifted, Winkenwerder said.

However, because of the wording of the judge's opinion, servicemembers wanting to participate in the program voluntarily are unable to do so. After fulfilling government contracts, little of the current vaccine is available to the general public.

"We're hoping and planning ... to have a new anthrax vaccine with large amounts available," Winkenwerder said. "And maybe within a couple years' time, vaccine would be available to the general public."

Winkenwerder said the new vaccine is under development with the project being led by the Department of Health and Human Services. The department's plan is to have 75 million doses produced within the next year, however, it would still have to go through testing and FDA licensing.

The concerted effort to produce and develop large quantities of the vaccine is being made to not only protect the troops, Winkenwerder said, but also the American public. That effort is necessary because there is still a threat of an attack using anthrax as a weapon, despite the fact that no weapons of mass destruction were found in Iraq, he said.

"There's clearly a continuing threat," he said. "We know from intelligence information and also from comments that have been made by the leaders of the intelligence community that the terrorists ... have expressed an avowed interest in biological and chemical and nuclear weapons."

"They've spoken specifically about anthrax," Winkenwerder added. "With that kind of threat out there, it's really important that we take the steps that we must take to protect our people."

The vaccine is not the only way the government is working to protect the public from these threats. Winkenwerder named post-exposure antibiotic treatment and early-warning systems that can sample the air for an exposure as alternative protective measures.

Support  
Operation  
E.L.F.





## Retirees' Voice

### Highlights of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2005: Ready for President's signature

SGT. 1ST CLASS (RET.)  
JOHN BEDNARZ

At the time of my writing this, the House and Senate Conferees have completed the majority of their work on the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2005 and are preparing to get the document printed and to the President for his signature.

One good thing to come out of their deliberations is an increase of the Survivor Benefit Plan offset from 35 percent to 55 percent, to be phased in over 3 1/2 years, thus eliminating the "two-tier" program by 2008.

The increases should be up to 40 percent of retired pay on Oct. 1, 2005, and then to 45 percent on April 1, 2006.

Then it would increase to 50 percent on April 1, 2007, and finally to 55 percent on April 1, 2008.

We then would have parity with Federal Employees who have been receiving 55 percent all along.

Another feature of the final bill is the receipt of, 'full concurrent receipt' for all military retirees with 100 percent disabilities, without the 10-year phase-in.

This will be effective on Jan. 1, 2005. This is good news for the approximately 30,000 retirees who are 100 percent disabled. But it doesn't end there.

We are still pushing to give 'full concurrent receipt' to all military retirees

who have deductions from their retired pay to cover their VA Disability Pay.

Many other good things were accomplished in this round of legislation, including a healthcare benefit for members of the reserve components by authorizing TRICARE coverage for Reserve members who have served on extended active duty; approved permanent eligibility for up to 90 days prior to mobilization and 180 days of transitional health benefits for them and their families after separation from active duty; educational assistance; permanent hostile fire and imminent danger pay, and family separation allowance.

For the highlights of the bill visit the Senate Armed Services Committee website at <http://armed-services.senate.gov>

All of this was accomplished with the help of our lobbyists in Congress that are part of the military coalition, to include EANGUS and NGAUS, the national arm of our National Guard Association of Connecticut.

You know of course that a very large part of the credit goes to you who sent e-mails and letters, made phone calls and personal visits to your congresspersons or caught their ear when they were at home in their districts.

It was truly a grass-roots effort.

Well Done!

The other day I was approached by a

friend and former co-worker who asked if he could submit an article composed by his wife, and by the way, very well written.

It was an announcement of his grandson's graduation from the Military Academy at West Point.

As it should be, this grandfather is extremely proud of all of his grandson's accomplishments, which were many.

Unfortunately as a military publication under the rules of Department of Defense, personal items such as this are not accepted for publication and Earl, a retired NCO, will turn to his local newspapers.

His grandson is now serving as a Second Lieutenant in the U. S. Army and I know we all wish him well in his career.



## HANDYPERSON HOTLINE

CALL  
(860)209-0770  
TODAY  
TO VOLUNTEER  
YOUR SKILLS



By Bob Rosenburgh





# Connecticut National Guard

## Fulltime Employment Opportunities

The following are Connecticut Army and Air National Guard Technician openings. For a copy of the full Technician vacancy announcements, go to [www.ct.ngb.army.mil](http://www.ct.ngb.army.mil) and click on employment opportunities.

### Army National Guard Technician Vacancies

Position Title	Unit	Pay Grade	Closing Date
Aircraft Inspector	AVCRAD	WG-12	Nov. 12, 2004
Aircraft Electrician	AVCRAD	WG-10	Nov. 12, 2004
Heavy Mobile Equipment Repairer	UTES	WG-09	Nov. 12, 2004
Electronics Mechanic	AVCRAD	WG-11	Nov. 12 2004
Information Technology Specialist	USPFO	GS-09	Nov. 12, 2004
Electronics Mechanic	AVCRAD	WG-10/8/5	Nov. 15, 2004
Tools and Parts Attendant	AASF	WG-05	Nov. 26, 2004
Heavy Mobile Equip. Repair Supervisor	OMS-7	WG-09	Nov. 11, 2004
Plans and Operations Assistant	POMSO	GS-07	Nov. 12, 2004
Administrative Assistant	USPFO	GS-07	Nov. 29, 2004

### Air National Guard Technician Vacancies

Position Title	Unit	Pay Grade	Closing Date
Aircraft Mechanic	103rd FW	WG-12	Nov. 1, 2004
Aircraft Pneudraulic Systems Mechanic	103rd FW	WG-10	Nov. 16, 2004
Supervisory Architect/Engineer	103rd FW	GS-13	Nov. 16, 2004
Airplane Flight Instructor	103rd FW	GS-13	Nov. 18, 2004

Listed below are current openings in the Connecticut National Guard AGR program. For a copy of the Military Tour Vacancy Announcement, go the [www.ct.ngb.army.mil](http://www.ct.ngb.army.mil) and click on employment opportunities.

### Army National Guard AGR Vacancies

Position Title	Unit	Rank	Area of Consideration
Production Recruiter	RRC	SFC/E-7	Open AGR Statewide
Training Officer	HHC, 102nd INF BN	01-03	Open AGR Nationwide

### Air National Guard AGR Vacancies

Position Title	Unit	Rank	Area of Consideration
Budget Officer	103rd FW	01-03	On Board AGR Only
Aircraft Mechanic	103rd FW	Up to E-6	On Board AGR Only
Supervisory Architect/Engineer	103rd FW	04-05	On Board AGR Only
Aircraft Pneudralic Systems Mech.	103rd FW	Up to E-6	On Board AGR Only
Airplane Flight Instructor	103rd FW	03-05	On Board SGR Only

NOTE: Other positions with outdated closing dates are also listed on the website. Some of these positions are currently under consideration, and others may have their application dates extended. Keep checking the website and if you have any questions concerning outdated postings, call HRO at (860) 878-6739 or (860) 878-6729.

## Handyperson Hotline for families and volunteers

Calling all soldiers and airmen, retirees or spouses. Volunteer to donate some of your time and expertise to the CTNG Family Program's Handyperson Center. If you are a tradesman or an all around handyperson or a laborer, the Handyperson Center is looking for you!

E-mail your name, phone number skill, status (active, retired, spouse) and hometown to Sgt. Maj. Toby Cormier at [toby.cormier@ct.ngb.army.mil](mailto:toby.cormier@ct.ngb.army.mil) or call (860) 209-0770.

The Handyperson Hotline is designed to reduce the stressors on the families of deployed soldiers and airmen by having everyday household problems diagnosed and repaired or referred to competent businesses at no cost for labor.

The program is also designed to get seasonal chores such as window air conditioners installed/removed, pools opened/closed, leaves removed, items brought to the dump and so on.

All of this can be performed by fellow Guardsmen,

retirees or spouses of Guardsmen who are willing to donate their time and expertise to this program.

Here's how the program works:  
A deployed family member calls the Handyperson Hotline with a clogged drain.

The Hotline manager contacts a plumber from the Handyperson Database who will contact the family member and attempt to walk the person through correcting the problem (if possible.)

If not corrected, the Hotline will dispatch a qualified person (fellow Guardsman) to the house to correct the problem.

It is designed to give the deployed family somewhere to turn to keep the home operating smoothly without having to pay to get things done around the house that were normally done by the deployed soldier or airman.

To volunteer or for more information, call (860) 209-0770 today.

## Coming Events

### November

#### November 2

Election Day

#### November 4

Officer Dining In

Aqua Turf, Southington

#### November 7

Veterans' Day Parade

Hartford

#### November 10

NGACT Pre-Holiday Party benefit for  
Operation E.L.F.

#### November 11

Veteran's Day

#### November 20

Family Program Health & Wellness Fair

#### November 25

Thanksgiving

### December

#### December 7

Pearl Harbor Day

#### December 8

Hanukkah

#### December 19

Maneeley's Family Holiday Party

#### December 25

Christmas

#### December 26

Kwanzaa

#### December 31

New Year's Eve

### January

#### January 1

New Year's Day

#### January 17

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

#### January 20

Presidential Inauguration Day

## In future issues

Vietnam Veterans serve in GWOT

Helmets to Hardhats

Stalking: When dating turns to terror

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month  
previous to publication.



# Company C, 102nd Infantry in Iraq



Members of 4th Platoon, E Troop, 151 CAV patrol in the city of Hussienia, Iraq. Connecticut's Company C, 102nd Infantry from Bristol is with the 151st. (Photo by Spc. David Hill, Company C, 102nd Infantry)



Members of Company B, 102nd Infantry perform night operations to observe a known IED emplacement site. (Photo by Spc. David Hill, Company B, 102nd Infantry)

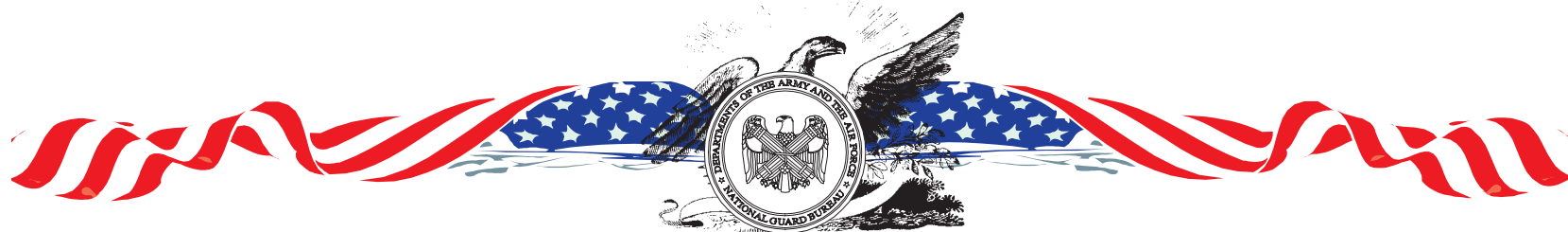


Front row from left to right: Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class O'Toole, Staff Sgt. Lebeau, Sgt. Shary, Spc. Sirko, Spc. Aparo, Sgt. Gokey, Spc. Dufour, Spc. Ducki, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Marshall  
Back row from left to right: Staff Sgt. Ravizzoli, Staff Sgt. Rand, Spc. Hill, Sgt. Mines, Staff Sgt. Aparicio, Spc. Ramos, Sgt. Martin, Spc. Husted, Spc. Hoyt, Sgt. Barkman, Sgt. Schadtle, Sgt. Dempsey, Spc. Cunningham, Spc. Alvarez, Spc. Montes, Spc. Chuchro, Spc. Gutowski, Spc. Eichner  
Not pictured: Spc. Poloszczak, Spc. Driscoll, Spc. Ayala, Sgt. Purdue, Spc. Ballantyne, Spc. Jones, Spc. Leclair (Photo courtesy 1st Lt. Rick Marshall, Company C, 102nd Infantry)

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# Family Deployment Supplement to the Connecticut Guardian

VOL. 5 NO. 11

HARTFORD, CT

NOVEMBER 2004

## President signs tax relief bill benefiting millions of families

EXCERPTS OF REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT ON THE SIGNING  
OF THE WORKING FAMILIES TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2004  
SOUTH SUBURBAN YMCA  
DES MOINES, IOWA

Today, with my signature, federal law will extend vital tax relief for millions of American families and add momentum to our growing economy. Today, here in Des Moines, Iowa, the Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004 becomes the law of the land, and I appreciate you being here to watch it.

I want to thank all the members of Congress who worked hard to get this bill done.

The law I sign this morning comes at just the right time for America. Some of tax relief provisions we passed over the last three years were set to expire at the end of 2004. Unless we acted, a family of four earning \$40,000 would have seen their federal income taxes rise by more than \$900. That would have been a burden for hardworking families across America. And it would have been a setback for our economy.

Today we're acting to keep vital tax relief

in place. The bipartisan bill I sign today extends the \$1,000 child tax credit, the marriage penalty relief and the expanded 10 percent tax bracket. It also protects millions of families from having to pay the alternative minimum tax in 2005. That tax was designed over three decades ago to make sure wealthy Americans pay their fair share of taxes. But now it affects middle income families. This bill will also increase the child credit refunds for almost 7 million low-income families in the 2004 tax year.

Overall, 94 million Americans will have a lower tax bill next year, including 70 million women and 38 million families with children. The money they keep will make it easier to save for their retirement, or their children's education, invest in a home or a small business, or pay off credit card debts.

This legislation will have good effects throughout the economy. The tax relief we passed in 2001 has helped our economy overcome a lot of challenges — a stock market decline, a recession, terrorist attacks, and war. By extending key portions of that tax relief, we will leave close to \$50 billion

next year in the hands of the people who earned it. And that money will help keep the economy moving forward, and result in even more new jobs for American workers.

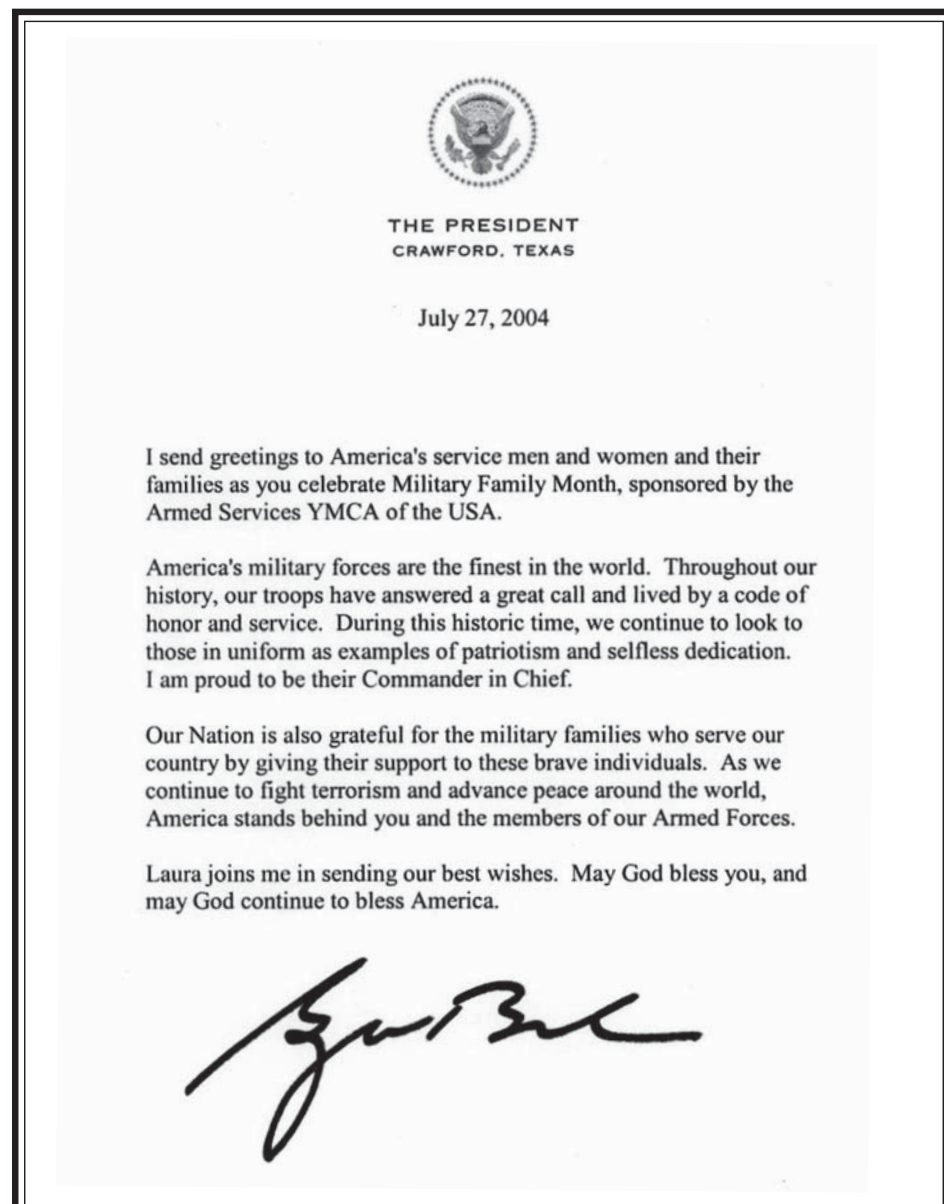
This act of Congress is essential, but it's only a start. Over the next few years, if we fail to take further action, the tax relief will expire and federal income taxes will go up for every American who pays them. For the sake of our families and small businesses, and farmers, investors, and seniors, we need to make all the tax relief permanent.

I look forward to working with the Congress to achieve all these goals. When we keep taxes low and trust our American families with their own money, they spend it far more wisely than we can. And when they do, they make the American economy stronger.

I appreciate the members of Congress who are here today. I wish they'd come up and join me as, in the great city of Des Moines, Iowa, I sign into law the Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004.



President George W. Bush signs H.R. 1308, the Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004 at the South Suburban YMCA in Des Moines Iowa, Monday, Oct. 4, 2004.







CATHERINE GALASSO

## *This Thanksgiving we are thankful for you, dear Soldiers!*

No day of the year calls us to rejoice the way Thanksgiving does. More than just a holiday feast, Thanksgiving is a celebration of all gifts tangible and intangible.

On this holiday and on every occasion, I'd like to give thanks for the significant contributions our men and women in uniform make every day.

These liberties we enjoy do not come without a price. Throughout history, many have sacrificed to preserve our freedoms and to defend peace around the world. Today, let us set a welcoming place for you, dear Soldiers and express our appreciation for all that you do for us. The brave men and women of our military, these heroes and their loved ones have the gratitude of our Homeland.

Each moment of my life is a reason to take time to give thanks for all God's gifts and be thankful for those who love us, who encourage us to do what is right and who applaud our successes. Let's all be grateful for our health, family, friends, shelter, enough food, clothes, our jobs, caring teachers, freedom and our country. And we must never take for granted the things that make our country great; America is a land of opportunity, abundance, and hope.

What treasures we have; we are blessed in so many ways. Can you hold your head up and smile? Are you able to read? Can you embrace someone's hand and offer God's healing touch?

How about your dreams, your aspirations? What is their value?

Be thankful for them and thankfully pursue them with enthusiasm.

Certainly, we all have troubles, but thankfulness chases away the blues and reminds us of the many wonderful things our Father has already provided. Let's take hold of every instant and savor its joy, to experience God, hidden in simplicity, and to see His glory in all things. I like to remember the Biblical wisdom, "In everything give thanks." In want or in plenty, in times of challenge or times of peace, we always have reasons to be

grateful. Incredible responses and miraculous encounters come after we give thanks.

The Hebrew origins for the word "thank" also means to acknowledge and to confess.

Offer thankfulness when shade eclipses the daylight.

Put forth appreciation when we are weighed down with setbacks.

Continue to worship as we hit a stumbling block.

Watch life abound in joy as we verbalize our thanks.

We must always rejoice and speak aloud thankfulness for the things that we have, whether they are much or little, they are treasures. A grateful mind is both peaceful and content. Gratitude is the greatest of virtues and the quickest access to the joy of life.

Gratitude takes on three forms: a feeling in the heart, an expression in words and then an overwhelming desire to share the joy. It may be a kind word, a loving touch or a helping hand. In an enduring way, vitality springs from sharing and being committed to another human being. A surge of energy can go through us when we help another and give of ourselves.

One person can truly make a difference. Mother Teresa said, "If you can't feed a hundred people then feed just one." Pass on a positive spirit, a bright smile of encouragement or a warm hug to a friend. Those who bring rays of sunshine into the life of another will have abundant happiness that just keeps bubbling up in their hearts like an underground spring. Our Founders thanked the Almighty and humbly sought His wisdom. And may we always live by that same trust.

May God continue to watch over you; dear Soldiers and God bless America.

*Write to Catherine Galasso-Vigorito, nationally syndicated columnist and author of "A New You, Words to Soothe the Body, Mind and Spirit," in care of Connecticut Guardian, 360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105-3795 or e-mail her at [anewyou@snet.net](mailto:anewyou@snet.net)*

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## Toll-free line has answers to long term-care questions

SAMANTHA L. QUIGLEY  
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

Got questions? Long Term Care Partners has answers.

For any federal employee trying to decide if the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program is right for them, FLTCIP Consultative Services Unit offers a toll-free hotline.

On the other end of the line are consultants, not commissioned sales people — so no hard-sell tactics to worry about. Because they have a broad base of knowledge on the FLTCIP product, as well as of the industry and competitive products, they can answer any of your questions objectively.

The consultants, trained by Long Term Care Partners, mostly come from customer-service backgrounds, said Joan Melanson, director of program promotions for LTC Partners. John Hancock and MetLife formed LTC Partners after OPM selected them as the federal government's long-term-care insurers in 2001.

Consultants are also available for call back. This means you don't have to start over with someone new if you have another question and call again. This not only saves the caller the frustration of having to repeat their information, it also saves consultants time because they don't have to get newly acquainted with every caller.

"We establish such wonderful relationships. We have some people call back and say, 'I just wanted to call back and let you know I was approved,'" Melanson said. "We get incredible compliments that come back through e-mails or people calling or sending letters. They really like the service that they get."

Currently, there are approximately 205,000 people enrolled in the program. LTC Partners recommend enrolling early.

"You're never too young to enroll. You never know when you might need it,"

Melanson said. "The younger, the better, because you'll pass medical underwriting. It is a medically underwritten program, and the premiums are a lot lower (for healthy people)."

While the insurance program is not recommended for those who qualify for Medicaid, anyone who has \$30,000 or more in assets to protect should consider the coverage. Enrollment at a younger age has its benefits, such as lower premiums.

If you already have a long-term-care insurance policy, but it was purchased a few years or more ago, FLTCIP can be used as a supplemental policy. It can add new benefits that weren't available when the old policy was purchased.

"If someone has purchased a product in the past, we're very reluctant to replace it. If someone purchased it five or six or eight years ago, the premiums were calculated at (the individual's age at the time), but it might not have some of the newer features," Melanson said. "So it may make sense to purchase a supplemental policy to add on."

Consultants can also offer a rate quote based on personal needs right on the phone. If preferred, the quote can also be mailed.

A Web site is also available and provides comprehensive information on both FLTCIP and the long-term-care industry. A rate quote can also be generated through the Web site, which Melanson said is excellent for younger employees who may not be ready to enroll in a long-term insurance program, but are curious about coverage.

She said the average age for enrollment is the "pre-retirement" age: late 40s to 60. In fact, pre-retirement seminars are sometimes the first exposure employees have to information about long-term-care programs.

People put off getting this kind of coverage until they are older, she said.

However, she added, statistics show that 63 percent of claimants are under the age of 65.

The toll-free number, 1-800-LTC-FEDS (1-800-582-3337) is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 7 p.m. Eastern Time. Consultants have been taking more than 5,000 inbound calls a month, Melanson said.



Visit the  
**Connecticut Guardian**  
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# Postal agency sets overseas holiday mailing dates, policies

STAFF SGT. C. TODD LOPEZ  
AIR FORCE PRINT NEWS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The dates for mailing items to and from overseas locations in time for the holidays are fast approaching, and officials at the Military Postal Service Agency here have suggestions for ensuring packages and letters arrive on time.

"If packages are mailed earlier, it may be possible to use space-available mail or parcel post service, which would result in less expensive postage rates," said Mark DeDomenic, the agency's chief of operations.

As the holidays approach, mail volumes get higher, and it takes longer for packages to get through the system, DeDomenic said.

The recommended deadlines for sending mail from the United States to all overseas military mailing addressees for the holidays are listed below.

- Parcel post: Nov. 13.
- Space-available mail: Nov. 27.
- Parcel airlift mail: Dec. 4.
- Priority and first-class letters/cards: Dec. 11 (Dec. 6 for APO 093).
- Express mail military service: Dec. 20 (Not applicable for APO 093).

DeDomenic said these dates can also be observed by customers sending mail from overseas locations to the United States, and that all dates may vary depending on location.

"Customers should contact their local military post office overseas get exact dates," DeDomenic said.

People mailing packages need to be aware that customs forms are required on all international mail, and that shipments should be properly packaged before sending them overseas, DeDomenic said.

"Always use strong boxes with plenty of packing material, such as newspaper or popcorn," he said. "Strapping or reinforced tape is strongly recommended. Ensure fragile items are packed tightly and individually wrapped in bubble wrap."

Postal services in the United States and foreign nations have restrictions on what can be mailed in or out of the country. DeDomenic said postal customers need to

consider these restrictions and also the length of the journey when mailing items overseas.

"Generally speaking, anything that would cause harm to other mail, equipment or mail handlers, or anything that is hazardous to

an aircraft in-flight is nonmailable," DeDomenic said. "Customers should check with their local military post office for specific regulations. In general, plants, some food items such as meats, alcohol, hazardous materials and flammable goods may not be mailed."

Also critical to getting packages overseas on time is ensuring they have the correct mailing address.

The number one reason for delayed delivery of mail is improper or incomplete addresses, DeDomenic said.

He said people sending mail to an overseas APO or FPO, should not use the geographical location. For example, do not use Baghdad, Iraq, on the address. This will cause the mail to be placed into the

international mail system and may cause severe delays.

Because of security restrictions, mass-mailing operations such as Operation Dear Abby or the "Any Servicemember" mailing programs are not being supported by the agency, DeDomenic said.

Agency officials encourage servicemembers to support the publicly available Web sites that allow the American public to write supportive letters to them.

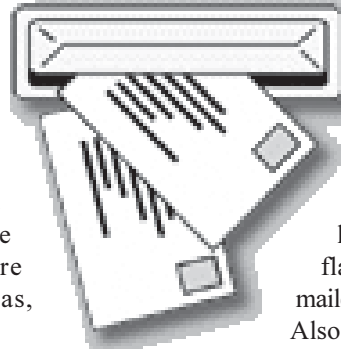
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*Mark DeDomenic, Military Postal Service Agency chief of operations*

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## DESIGN A LOGO!!



Design a Logo for  
the Youth  
Program and win a  
prize!!

Deadline for the contest is  
1 December 2004. Winner will be announced at our  
Youth Program Holiday Event! Please mail in your logo to  
Family Program  
Youth Program  
360 Broad Street  
Hartford, CT 06106

## CONTEST



## HANDYPERSON HOTLINE



"CARRYING THE HOMEFRONT"

**SERGEANT MAJOR  
TOBY P. CORMIER**

Ph: 860-441-2984

Cell: 860-209-0770

toby.cormier@ct.ngb.army.mil

The Connecticut National Guard Family Program Presents A

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS FAIR



**NOVEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2004**

**10:00 AM TO 3:00 PM**

**HARTFORD ARMORY**

*Open to all CT National Guard  
Members and Their Families*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE  
CALL 800-858-2677**

~STRESS SCREENING & STRESS REDUCTION TIPS~

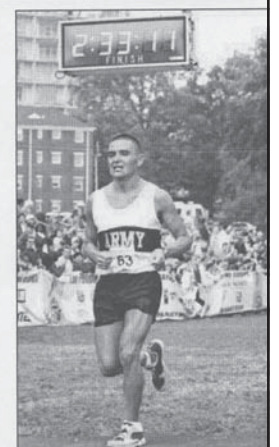
~BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING~

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~TIPS ON GOOD EXERCISE HABITS~

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# Family Assistance Center locations

Family Assistance Centers are set-up in the following armories around the state:

Bristol Armory  
61 Center Street, Bristol, CT 06010  
(860) 582-1206 Toll Free 866-347-2283  
Sgt. Michael Bertoli

Waterbury Armory  
64 Field Street, Waterbury, CT 06702  
(203) 574-2406 Toll Free 866-347-2291  
Sgt. Jonathon Duffy & Spec. Tamara Jex

Manchester Armory & AVCRAD  
330 Main Street, Manchester, CT 06040  
(860) 646-0780 Toll Free 866-347-2286 Capt. Lauri Tinelle

103rd FW, Bradley ANG Base  
Bldg 8, East Granby, CT 06026  
(860) 292-2730 Mrs. Donna Rivera

Hartford Armory  
360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105-3795  
1-800-858-2677  
Mrs. Kim Hoffman, Mrs. Michelle McCarty, Mrs. Karen Somes, OC Claude Hibbert and Sgt. Jessica McKenna

Norwich Armory  
38 Stott Avenue, Norwich, CT 06360  
(860) 823-1342 Ext. 12 Toll Free 866-347-3357  
Mrs. Andrea Lathrop

103rd Air Control Squadron  
206 Boston Post Road, Orange, CT 06477  
(203) 795-2983 Charlie and Jane Solomon

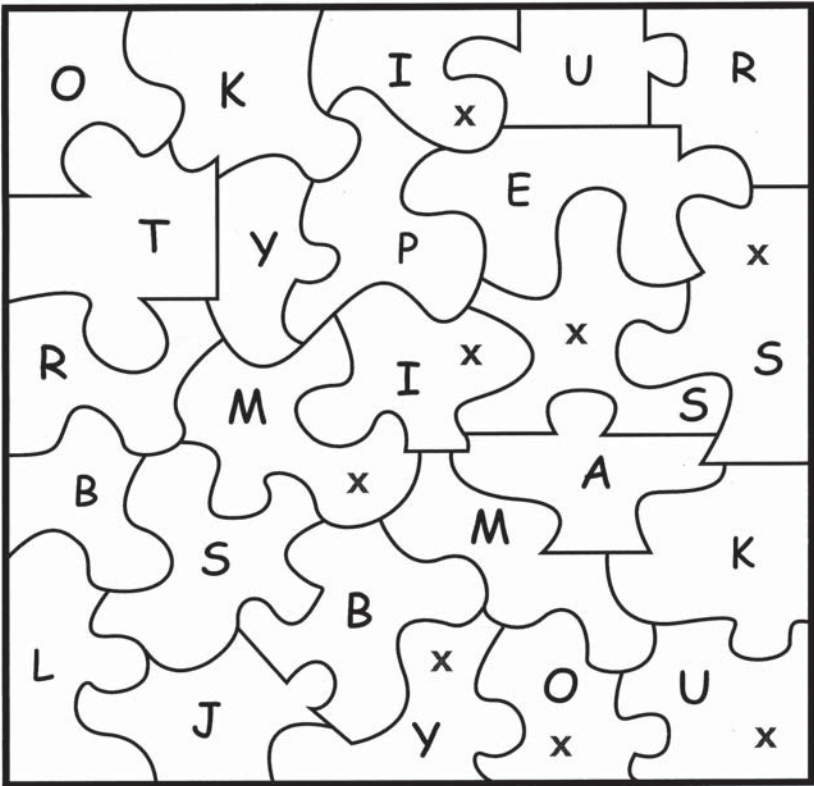
New Britain Armory  
855 Stanley Street, New Britain, CT 06053  
Sgt. Elizabeth Crouthamel (860) 883-6935

Volunteers are needed in each facility.  
Those wishing to help out can contact Mrs. Kim Hoffman, Family Program Manager at 1-800-858-2677.

Any family member or loved one of a deployed soldier who has questions about benefits or deployment issues may also get answers to their question at the following email address: [kim.hoffman@ct.ngb.army.mil](mailto:kim.hoffman@ct.ngb.army.mil)

## FIND THE HIDDEN MESSAGE

To find the hidden message, use a red crayon to color the puzzle pieces that have an X in them. Use any color you want for the rest of the pieces!



## Kids' Creative Corner

A MONTHLY FEATURE OF  
FUN AND EDUCATIONAL  
ACTIVITIES

Answer: I Miss You